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MY MOTHER'S

MANUSCRIPT;

BEING A TRUE PICTURE OF THE PRIVATE LIFE
OF A FRENCH FAMILY DURING MANY OF
THE MOST EVENTFUL PERIODS OF
THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

WITH ANNOTATIONS, PROLOGUES, AND EPILOGUES.

BY

ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY

MARIA LOUISA HELPER.

137189

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DEDICATION.

TO

MRS. EMILY BEACH POLK,

FORMERLY OF ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA,
NOW OF BALTIMORE, MARYLAND,

WIDOW OF CAPT. ALEXANDER HAMILTON POLK,

IN WHOSE FAMILY, CONSISTING OF THEMSELVES AND THEIR FIVE CHILDREN, MORE THAN IN ANY OTHER FAMILY OF MY ACQUAINTANCE, I HAVE SEEN EXEMPLIFIED THE NATURAL NOBLENESS AND EXALTED VIRTUES OF THE FAMILY OF MADAME ALICE DE LAMARTINE, AS HEREIN PORTRAYED,

THIS BOOK,

WITHOUT THE SLIGHTEST KNOWLEDGE ON HER PART,

IS MOST AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED,

IN THE HOPE AND TRUST THAT SHE WILL PARDON THE LIBERTY WHICH A SINCERE FRIEND, THE TRANSLATOR, HAS THUS TAKEN WITH HER GOOD NAME.

M. L. H.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

WHILE on a visit, in 1873, to my family and friends at Buenos Ayres, in the Argentine Republic, "My Mother's Manuscript," which was then and there serially republished in Spanish, in *La Tribuna*, one of the principal newspapers of the country, casually came into my hands; and having always been a great reader and admirer of the writings of Lamartine, I read this also, his last work, with an unusual degree of interest and pleasure.

So deeply impressed was I with the exquisite simplicity and pathos of this new drama of domestic life in France, that I soon formed the purpose of translating it into English; and this purpose remained steadily with me until after my return to the United States, where, in the city of New York, I found and purchased (what I had not been able to find in Buenos Ayres) a copy of the original work in French; and therefrom—and not from the Spanish—has been educed the translation in hand.

As a mere matter of fact (yet of small moment), I may here state, that I only predetermined to make this translation in Buenos Ayres, began it in North Carolina, continued it in New York, and finally, after a long sojourn in New York, returned to North Carolina, and there finished it. The further fact that, with little else to do meanwhile, I have spent more than two years in transforming this little book from French into English, only

proves what a very slow and, as I fear, imperfect worker I am.

This dilatoriness of action on my part has not been without result, as affecting the work, in a far-distant land. Only a few weeks before my own translation was finished, I was surprised, and yet (considering the great interest and merit of the "Manuscript") not surprised, to read a brief item in the literary department of a New York newspaper, stating that Madame Lamartine's diary, as revised and edited by her son Alphonse, had already been translated into English by Lady Herbert, of London. That the original work in French should thus, at one and the same time, elicit absolutely different and spontaneous translation into English in both Europe and America, gives indication of the very high estimation in which the book may, perhaps, at a future period, be held throughout the republic of letters. As yet I have not seen, whether in the simple form of quotation or otherwise, so much as one line, nor even so much as one word, of Lady Herbert's translation; but, because of my curiosity to examine her labor, which, judging from the generality of British precedents in matters of this kind, I dare say has been ably and worthily performed, I have made arrangements to obtain a copy of her book, only, however, *after* my own rendering of the original shall have come from the press. Influenced by this determination, I have preserved, as I wished to preserve, the perfect independence, wholeness, and uniqueness of my own translation.

At first I abandoned entirely the idea of rendering into English the poetic portions of the "Manuscript," deeming it a task altogether too formidable and hazardous for one so unskilled as myself to undertake; but after carefully considering the subject several times, and fear-

ing that the work might be conspicuously incomplete without them, I resolved that I would at least try to translate those portions into an acceptable sort of metrical and consonant sense. If I am guilty of any undue presumption in this regard, I heartily crave my readers' pardon. Certain it is that my own poor faculties are too dull and prosaic to reflect anything of the artistic touch, the flowing beauty, or the majestic grandeur of Lamartine's lofty muse. The very most that I could hope to accomplish in this particular matter was to reproduce, with passable ingenuity, the golden links of harmony and significance which exist between the author's incomparable prose on the one side and his sublime poetry on the other. In my efforts to maintain the natural and necessary connection between these two very different yet respectively perfect forms of expression by one of the great masters in modern literature,—a man equally able and distinguished, whether as a frequenter of the Academy or as a visitor at Helicon,—I may frankly admit that I did the best I knew how to do, and that having so done, I could do no more.

If, as is but too probable, I have not succeeded in rendering the obvious and impressive facts of this book more cheerful and interesting than the very best of the works of modern fiction, and more hopeful and elevating in tone than many of the distinctively moral dissertations of the times, it was and is only because of my sheer inability to do justice to the original.

Yet this I may avow, with all candor, that while, even for this world, I have not been unmindful of the sacredness of my obligation to make strenuous efforts to preserve, as fully as possible, the original brilliance and purity of this French gem of perfect literature, neither have I ceased to be profoundly imbued with the thought

that, after the present life, a future may come when, for the manner of my translation of the work, primarily so well fitted to influence in mankind a more generous and noble order of opinions and actions within the family circle, I may be held to account, both by the Great Spirit of Him who is always the Sum of All in All, and by the immeasurably less potent spirits of the Lamartines themselves, mother and son, who first wrote, and wrote so well, in another language, the hallowed pages of this "Manuscript."

If the work, in the English garb in which I thus have the pleasure of presenting it to the world, shall prove to only so many as two or three of my readers half so fascinating and gratifying as the Spanish and the French editions of the same work have proved to me, I shall always feel fully justified and rewarded for my intermediacy herein, which, from the very first, has been with me a self-imposed labor of both love and duty.

M. L. H.

ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA, September 21, 1876.

RONCHAUD'S PREFACE TO THE FIRST FRENCH EDITION.

To two minds and two hearts is due the authorship of this book. The financial distress and ruin which so sorely afflicted the closing days of Lamartine, had compelled him to sell the precious manuscript drawn from the ancient records of his family, enlarged and embellished by his own commentaries, as a filial tribute to a sacred memory. The publication of the work was even announced during his lifetime; but, at his own special and urgent request, it was deferred. Bought and reserved by the publishers of his posthumous works, the book can now properly appear; the son having gone to rejoin his mother in the tomb; and a profound and universal respect having been awakened in connection with the least recollection of the great genius who has thus descended to posterity. This work, the "Manuscript of my Mother," forms, with the unpublished "Memoirs," the last link in the narrative of his life, which Lamartine himself has prepared. It contains the sweetly romantic incidents of his childhood and youth, so much the more precious as they are authentic, having for witness the very mother herself of the poet, a woman truly worthy and noble, who had faithfully transcribed them in a journal, wherein it was her custom to tell to herself anew the daily events of her domestic hearth.

Since the acquisition of the manuscript by the proprietors who now publish it, its appearance has been retarded by the late appalling events which have filled France with desolation. Now that the return to peace and order permits us to come back at last to the pure joys of literature, the moment seems opportune to recall public attention to the beautiful and elevating writings of Lamartine. After so many severe trials and so many painful humiliations, it is necessary for France to reinvigorate herself with the reading and the study of her great authors; to recount her glories, and to behold her genius shining once more in those who have carried highest and furthest her sympathetic brilliance and splendor. Of those authors Lamartine is universally and justly acknowledged to be one of the greatest.

In less troubled and less unhappy times, although himself saddened also by the remembrance of revolutions and wars, he gave out, for the first time, his songs of love, of sympathy, and of hope. Is it not a singular predestination which brings out of the tomb to-day, and resounds through so many ruins, a last and more melancholy outburst of his pure and religious poetry?

The reappearance at this time of the name of Lamartine is entitled to another welcome. Although politics are absent from this book, yet it will not the less recall to mind the Great Republican of 1848; the man who, during a revolutionary crisis, bravely recommended to France a republican form of government as her safest refuge against the recurrence of internal strife. The republic of which he had conceived the idea, and of which his name has remained the symbol, the true republic, great, open, and generous, protecting all vested rights and legitimate interests, is the very republic which France is now again endeavoring to establish; for it alone can,

at one and the same time, preserve France from the violence of desperate demagogues and from the tendencies toward a blind and fatal reaction.

Seated in the ranks of the National Assembly, more than one disciple of Lamartine is now striving to maintain in France the republican form of government, and to develop to the best advantage the true republican idea. May the genius of their worthy and eminent master look down upon them, and upon all those who, with a devoted heart and with a strong and faithful hope and purpose, are engaged in the same noble work!

In an ode to Lamartine, an American poet has expressed the opinion that, although the Republic of 1848 was only the hastily-sketched outline of a system of government, yet it was the most beautiful work of the poet, as the most beautiful work of Michael Angelo was his unfinished bust of Brutus. If, as is to be sincerely hoped, the interrupted work shall be resumed and successfully terminated by other hands; if full and perfect liberty shall indeed be established in France, upon a solid and enduring basis; then the name written on the first page of this book ought certainly to be the first engraved, and the boldest in relief, on the pedestal of the statue of the French Republic.

LOUIS DE RONCHAUD.

PARIS, July 8, 1871.

LAMARTINE'S OWN ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER.

An entirely domestic circumstance, which it is useless to disclose to the public, has finally resulted in the giving of this little manuscript to the press. Both by its nature and by intention it was expected that it would forever remain a manuscript. It should at most have constituted a part of those sacred family records which the children, the grandchildren, the nephews and the nieces, find sometimes in the dusty drawer of some old piece of furniture in the country, and which they peruse for their own interest and edification during their long leisure in the holidays of autumn.

Yet, since the work has escaped from the domestic hearth, in spite of us, and is destined (with whatever reluctance on our part) to come before indifferent eyes and distant minds, we here dedicate it only to the family of that beautiful and affectionate mother who, in these pages, poured out the fullness of her heart, without foreseeing that she would not have time to secrete or destroy the pious pencilings of her home life. We beg that others will not attempt to read it, for they will probably find nothing here of what they are most apt to look for in a book; the manuscript itself being especially interesting only for those to whom this virtuous woman has transmitted either a drop of her blood or otherwise a kinship

of her soul. Let us here add to our limited company of natural privilege some few friends who still live in the country where she resided; some old servants who only pronounce her name, weeping at the happy recollection of it; and some peasants of the neighboring cottages, who frequently come down the mountain on pilgrimages and on days of prayer, and whose footsteps for twenty-eight years have prevented the grass from growing over the path which leads to her tear-moistened grave.

ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE.

SAINT POINT, November 2, 1858.

MY MOTHER'S MANUSCRIPT.

I.

THROUGHOUT the rural districts of France the second of November is a day that is generally designated as THE DAY OF THE DEAD. When I have sufficient leisure, I pass this day in solemn meditation at Saint Point, as near as possible to the little cemetery of the village, upon which opens a small private door of my garden.

There, just there, lies in the earth, which she loved so well, my precious mother, whose coffin rests affectionately beside another coffin, smaller than hers, which she seems to have drawn along with her, as the bed that gives way above may crush down the cradle beneath it. From that coffin my imagination does not even dare to lift the shroud, lest I should see again on earth that which, being lifeless here, I desire to see hereafter only in heaven.

II.

During this short and chilly day of autumn, I endeavor not to allow my thoughts to be diverted by any frivolous intercourse with the living from the sad and silent communion of my soul with the souls of those who are now no more in the flesh. I delight in wandering along the most gloomy paths of the woods, which still have a sufficient quantity of discolored leaves to intercept the pale rays of the sun; whilst here and there the faded and wilted foliage falls to the ground, signifying to us that all

living creatures are breathing death, and that, in verity, every terrestrial thing not dead must die. Outward Nature, in this month, is but a vast elegy which associates itself harmoniously with the eternal elegy of the heart of man.

I go, I come, I linger upon the wet grass, without any object but merely to go over and about the footsteps of dear and departed ones, who, in other days, would gently walk before me, behind me, or by my side, in these very by-paths. Unconsciously I stop every few moments, and, half transfixed in contemplation, my feet seem to become buried in the soil near the great isolated trees of the border of the woods, at the edge of which, either by chance or by habit, the older and the younger people used to meet together,—the mothers, the children, the uncles, the aunts, the nieces, the nephews, and the intimate friends of the family. Even yet do I seem to hear their mingling and melodious voices, grave or gay, amid the murmuring of the sometimes dull and sometimes merry rippling of the neighboring stream. Alas, they have risen forever from the trunks and roots of those trees, where they would sit in the beautiful mornings and evenings of September; but they have left behind them such enchanting impressions of memory, that I am frequently inclined to think that they have only wandered a few steps away, or that I have mistaken the tree or the glade which would guide me to join them again, and that I am, indeed, certainly going to see them and hear them once more at the very next turn of the footpath.

III.

There, very near by me, is one of the particular places where my eyes never tire of looking earnestly for those who will never more come to meet me. It is only a few

hundred steps from the house. To get there one has to follow a narrow road, over which the cattle go to graze, fringed with two hedges of thorn-bushes, through a large field covered with rocks, and a sloping meadow, where groups of oxen chew their cuds, and whose white and red marble-resembling flanks, flushed with fat, reflect the bright and glittering rays of a summer sun. This road, without either shade or grass, makes one long for the cool and shady vault of the woods, which may be seen waving under the breeze on the side of the mountain, near the boundary of the field and meadow.

At last one glides into a cooler place, all panting for breath, under the first screen of aspen-trees and alder-bushes, which grow on the margin of the meadow, where the oozings of the little fens and quagmires of the hills quench the thirst of their roots. There we breathe the humid moisture of a meadow stream. Soon the alders disappear, as the rocky soil becomes high and warm; then come in view the old trunks of the yoke-elms, hollowed like hives; the great beech-trees, whose bark is speckled like a fleece of gilded moss; the chestnut-trees, with their branches extended like the cedar, and which, with their sharp-pointed leaves, like lance-heads, decorate the entire length of the road. This road is suddenly terminated by a rough and precipitous declivity, which, however, is so situated as to be equally favored with all the dazzling light and heat of a bright summer sky. Here, indeed, is a very hollow and deep-cut valley, with an abrupt descent, which on one side plunges its disintegrations into the darkness of the forest, and on the other gradually spreads out into the well-cultivated fields and grassy meadows of the fertile lowlands.

The common grass of this locality, grazed with so much avidity by the goats and sheep, grows fine and yellow,

like those rare downs and lichens which, blown and sown by the winds, vegetate on the almost barren rocks of the escarpments of the Alps.

The field-flowers here do not rise higher than the shorn and outspread fleece of a sheep; in fact, one must sometimes stoop down to see them well; but their fragrance is delicious; and when you pick them, and lay them on the palm of your hand to examine their tissues, their corollas, their stamens, and their colors in miniature, you will perceive that Providence has taken as much pains with these minute and almost imperceptible germinations as with the most gigantic vegetables of our hot-houses or of our forests. The busy bees, the beautiful butterflies, the brilliant humming-birds, and the numerous winged insects without name, love these flowers, suck them in the sun, delight in the perfumed and genial warmth of the soil, and fill with happy music the valley of this little southern plain; merrily chasing one another in mock combat, and rapidly flying and buzzing hither and thither in the full joyousness of life.

IV.

Upon the hill opposite the road, cut off by this rugged opening in the earth, forty-five old oaks, spared for centuries by the wood-chopper, are scattered in disorder, and at considerable distances from one another, at the edge of the ravine. White, violet, and rose-colored heaths cover like an elegant carpet, as varied and velvety as the wool of Smyrna, the half-shaded spaces between the trees. The tops of these trees, beaten and bent for so many years by southerly winds, are half bald; their lower branches, especially those of the middle clump, are becoming black, and give other unmistakable evidences of saplessness and decay. Only a few small tufts of yellowish leaves dangle

from these limbs, and fall from time to time, forced from their twigs by the gusts of the equinoctial winds, with a husky and sudden noise, which causes the timid jays and blackbirds to fly away with fright.

Upon the border which overlooks the ravine, the seven oaks which form the front of the grove hang their wide-outstretched arms over sound and vigorous trunks, and show themselves to be the strongest and grandest old men of their race. Their more leafy tops do not permit us to see any of those black arrows, those slender and lifeless limblets, upon which the thrushes delight to dwell, and which serve as retreats and observatories for so many other kinds of birds. These trees extend their branches majestically over the slope of the valley, and their roots, almost on a level with the surface of the ground, cause the grass and the moss which cover them to swell with kindred and magnetic growth.

V.

It is at the foot of the largest of these oaks, the one nearest to the dense forest, that I used to light bonfires in my childhood; and the smoke-stains and cinders, though washed by the copious rains of so many winters, still blacken and deaden its rough bark. It is there that, later in youth and in early manhood, I have written with pencil so many poetical melodies, which came as lightly and merrily to my imagination as the warm breezes of spring came genially through the branches of the trees over my head, making them resound with sweet harmony. It is there that, in happier and still more lengthened days, we would sometimes come with the old people, and with the cradles of the family, to pass the warm hours of the afternoon, as we would otherwise do in a commodious and delightful drawing-room.

Nothing was there lacking of the natural stock of furniture requisite for a spot of repose and delight; neither the rustic pillars formed by the forty-five oaks standing erect over the grass-plot; nor the green canopies of leaves set in motion by the circulating breeze of the neighboring woods; nor the varied music of the lark and the nightingale perched and singing near the nests over which their mothers brooded; nor the soft cushions of dry moss growing from the roots and trunks of the trees; nor the musical drippings of the drains of the hill-side filtering through the clusters of little bushes of a darker and more lustrous green in the lower meadow; nor, finally, the dreamy smokiness of the distant mountains, which resemble so greatly those of Greece, and which are seen under the branches of the taller trees, like a picture through the open windows, draped with gorgeous and wavy curtains.

VI.

A perspective of that sweet place and that lovely time spreads itself out before both my eyes and my heart as I behold again the half-leafless branches of the oak-grove, which has now become tinged with yellow under the last rays of the summer sun.

Upon the roots of one of the oldest and most bended trees which form the boundary of the forest an aged woman, bowed down by her years, like the tree itself, is seated; her trembling hands spinning at a distaff filled with wool whose fibres are not whiter than her own hair. She exchanges, from time to time, with a young attendant, a few words in a foreign language. Her physiognomy has the placid appearance of the peace of a finished life which expects its reward in heaven, but which is born again upon the earth, in other and later generations, under her own eyes.

Another woman, in the sound and plump maturity of age, holds in her hand a half-closed book, which she opens and shuts at intervals, and occasionally reads a passage therein. Soon she closes it entirely, and unconsciously presses it between her two hands, as if earnestly and sincerely reflecting upon what she has read. One can see, by the serious fixedness of her features, that the book entertains her with the solemnity of eternal things. Her pious meditations lower, from time to time, her long and transparent eyelids; then she lifts up toward heaven the pensive globes of her black eyes. Her sedate and ascetic face is pale, and one can see in it the delicate lines of an exquisite moral beauty. It is the veil of a soul rather than the visage of a body; but the habit of a sweet and tender smile softens its austerity even in prayer. She turns her eyes, dazzling with celestial light, upon everything that surrounds her; and when, finally, they fall upon me, they linger there as agents of the purest gentleness and love. One can readily see that it is a saintly mother who joyfully contemplates the happiness of her son.

VII.

Lower down upon the grass-plot, here in shadow, and there in sunshine, a young lady with golden hair and blue eyes, and whose slender and graceful figure resembles one of the Nymphs of Ocean, is, with crayon and paper upon her knees, drawing sketches. She reproduces on paper a part of the beautiful scene before us, enlivened by the accidents of light and shade, by the smoke of the cottages, and by the goats frisking upon the rocks. At each stroke of the pencil she is interrupted by the happy exclamations of a beautiful and charming little child of about four years of age. This child becomes enraptured

on discovering in the moss a tiny buttercup, which she eagerly plucks for her mother. She brings her harvests in handfuls, and throwing them pell-mell upon the picture-page, receives an audible and affectionate kiss in recompense. Again she goes running toward the moss-plot, and when she stops and kneels upon the grass, to catch a winged insect within the calyx of a flower, she disappears almost entirely, as if covered by a veil, under her golden and disheveled hair, brightly gilded by the light of a perfect day. One might more readily imagine, in place of her, one of those curiously wound skeins of gold-colored silk which the washers of the cocoons hang on the hedges of the meadows to dry in the sun.

In the half shade of the background of the oak-grove a young man observes, at a distance, this scene of domestic life in the country. He walks, with uneven steps, from one tree to another; the moss deadens the sound of his footsteps; he holds in one of his hands a book, whose pages are blank; at intervals he stops to write down, with pencil, a few lines.

Here is what I wrote that day. Alas, how little did I then suspect that these verses would so soon turn to tears!

THOUGHTS ON THE DEAD.

Here are leaves without sap,
Which fall upon the grass;
There is the wind which rises
And moans in the valley;
Here is the wandering swallow
Which grazes with the tip of its wing
The sleeping waters of the swamp;
There is the child of the cottage,
Who gleans upon the heath
The boughs fallen from their trunks.

No longer do the billows murmur
With the song which enchanted the woods;
Under the branches without verdure
The birds are heard no more.
The night will soon follow the twilight;
Scarcely have the stars begun to shine
In the paths of their measureless orbits;
At intervals they throw
A pale glimmering light
Not wholly unlike the day.

The ewe upon the hills
Finds no more the grass-plot;
Her lamb leaves in the thorns
The loose fibres of its fleece.
The goldfinch, bird of sweet music,
Rejoices the beech-tree no longer
With its airs of joy or of love.
All the grass in the meadow is mowed.
This is the way in which the year ends;
And thus too are ended our days!

It is the season when everything falls
By the augmented gusts of October.
A blast-wind which comes from the tomb
Likewise the living cuts down;
They fall then by thousands,
Like the superfluous feathers
Which the eagle shakes off to the air
At a time when the new plumage
Comes again to warm its strong wing,
At the chilly approach of December.

Then was it that my eyes beheld
So many dear ones grow pale and die;
Tender fruits they were to the light,
But God would not let them get ripe!
Although myself young on the earth,
I am already left quite alone
Amidst relics of friends now no more;
And when of myself I ask, sadly,
"Where are those whom my heart loves?"
I look fixedly down on the grass.

The cradle has just been bereft
Of a child whom malevolent death
Cruelly cast down from the breast
Into the black bed of the grave;
All those, in fact, whose fast-ebbing lives
Have, in their time, taken flight far away,
And carried off with them some atoms of us,
Are now whispering under the earth,
"You who still enjoy the sight of light,
Do you yet remember us?"

Where are they? What orbs cast upon them
More abiding or more resplendent days?
Do they inhabit those upper isles of light?
Or do they now hover between heaven and earth?
Are they drowned in the ethereal depths?
Have they lost the loved names they bore here below?
The dear names of sister, sweetheart, and wife?
To these affectionate calls will they nevermore answer?

No, no, my God! If celestial glory
Had from them taken all human remembrance,
Thou wouldst also from our own memories have taken them;
Our sighs and our tears for them,—are all these in vain?

Ah, let their souls in Thy bosom find rest!
Yet retain us our places in their hearts.
They who of old did partake of our joys,
Can we be truly blest without their happiness?

Over them extend Thy merciful hand!
They, as we, have sinned; but heaven is a gift!
They have suffered; and that purifies!
They have loved; that is the seal of pardon!

They were the same as we are,—
Dust, the sport of the winds;
Fragile, like all mankind;
Weak, like nothingness.
If their feet often slipped,
If their lips did transgress

Any part of Thy law,
O Father! O Judge Supreme!
Do not look on them as men,
But in them see only Thyself!

If Thou deignest to examine the dust,
Off from before Thy breath it will fly;
If Thou touchest the light,
It will tarnish Thy fingers;
If Thine eye divine doth test
The columns of this world,
Under the heavens they will quake;
If Thou sayest to Innocence,
"Come up and plead in my presence!"
Thine own virtues will be veiled.

But Thou, O Lord, Thou possessest
Thine own immortality;
All the happiness Thou givest to others
Only increaseth Thy bliss and perfection!
Thou tellest the sun to give light,
And the day gildeth space everywhere!
Thou commandest time to bring forth,
And eternity, submissive to Thee,
Throws off the centuries by thousands,
Scattering them without keeping account!

Worlds which Thou dost repair,
Before Thee grow young again;
And never dost Thou separate
The Past from the Future.
Thou livest! and Thou livest! The ages
Which are unequal by Thy works,
Are yet all equal under Thy hand;
And never doth Thy voice accent,
Alas, these three words of man:
Yesterday, To-day, To-morrow!

O Father of Nature!
Source and Fountain of all Goodness,

Naught can be compared to Thee;
Forever art Thou supremely incomparable!
Put, O Divine Mercy,
Put Thy weight in the balance,
If, indeed, Thou wilt with nothingness weigh!
Triumph, O Pre-Eminent Virtue,
Whilst Thou contemplatest Thy function,
Triumph forever in forgiving us all!

VIII.

When the day declines, I go back into the house at a slow pace. There I shut myself up in the high-vaulted little chamber, whose window, fronting the bell-tower of the village, receives and reverberates, like a well-articulated ear, under the acoustic structure of the apartment, not only the loud and lively peals of the bell, but also the strong gusts and whistlings of the wind. For here, indeed, nature and religion seem to be in absolute harmony at this season, and especially so on this day, and to recall to the mind of the survivors pious thoughts of the tomb. The bell-ringer, clinging to the rope of the belfry, from early in the morning of the 1st of November till the dawn of the following morning, gives out, indefatigably and measuredly, by day and by night, the moaning sounds of recollections which fail not to evoke, from the heart of every one, the deep and inextinguishable memories which the earth-filled shovel of the grave-digger helped to bury in the field of the dead. This bell, turned and tossed and heated by the incessant pullings and jerkings of the ringer, seems to be tortured into a state of agony, and to paralyze and break every moment as abruptly as the snap of a human fibre.

These are the views which I expressed here, on the day mentioned, a little while ago, in strophes and stanzas, which still come stealing upon my memory:

THE VILLAGE BELL.

Oh, when this humble bell, with its slow dirge,
Sheds like a sigh its sound upon the valley,
A solemn sound echoed and re-echoed by the near ravine;
When the bright and blithesome boy who pulls the rope
Pours out his joyful ditty on the evening breeze,
Then may one think on earth of things divine.

When from the vibrating steeple its tenant the swallow
Takes flight from the loud bronze that shakes its dwelling,
And over the rippling pond skims but lightly its surface;
Or when the widow of the village at the knell kneels down,
After the finishing of the fibres which filled her distaff,
Then, opportunely for future felicity, may orisons be offered.

What awakens in my heart the sonorous song from the belfry
Is not the bright light of the morning,
Nor the sombre shade of the day near its close;
Nor yet is it the mirror of my fresh young years,
Fleet of foot over the hillocks, among fragrant flowers;
Though these to events past doth the memory beckon back.

Nor is it my childish slumbers under shades of sycamores,
Nor the first transports of nature in eagerness for play,
Nor my random walks over uneven vales or summits rough,
Nor only quick cries of joy on inhaling zephyr tonics;
O youth-beguiling morning breezes! full of fair enticing tastes,
These do ever lead us onward, tantalizing us the more!

Nor is it the proud steed prancing on the prairie,
Bending his beauteous neck under the firmly-held bridle,
And mingling his mane with his rider's light hair;
While under his feet the earth resounds like an anvil,
As rushingly forward he carries me, and as his white froth
Scatters and silvers all over the grass of the valley.

Nor yet is it the first faint dream of Love,
In the month wherein sap fast uprises with Spring,
Making the pink-beds blossom and the thickets grow green;
When only a glimpse of the dress, a glance of the eye,
Of the fair virgins, forthcoming from the waterfall fountains,
Would cause emotions and tremor deep down in my heart.

Neither is it the strange whisperings of Glory,
At the outset silently navigating the billows within; but soon
A quaint voiee, sweet of song, waking up in my mind
A delightfully melodious murmur, with ambrosia perfumed,
Whieh to its souree bears back a whiff of poetry; . . .
No, Glory, thou it is not that doth now arouse me.

From my long and regretless days, Fame, hie thee away,
Into the bercft stubble-fields, among the dead leaves,
With thy poor renown, thou empty and moeking Echo!
These flowers of the footpath are divine plants,
Whieh perfume the feet; yes, but their roots, indeed,
Do never cntwine themselves around the heart.

Garlands at feasts, gathered for only one night,
Are oft poisoned by Hatred, or withered by Envy;
Wreaths they are whose crowns by human hands are broken;
Having, though, to life impartcd first a momentary glee;
But no longer to their stems do the sickly flowers adhere;
From the fair brow they fall; they fade; they die.

'Tis the day when the bell through the valley, in tears,
Rang as if in despair after the funeral knell;
When two eoffins were lowered into the mournful earth,
And measured sad music with the wailings of women;
Threc eorpses they plaeed in a double sepulchre,
And me, aye me, they forgot at the gate!

From dawn until night, and from night until dawn,
O bell, thou didst weep, as I wept at that time,
In aceord with the suffocating sobs of my heart.
With thy bitter complaint air and earth did resound,
As if every star had lost its own mother,
And every breeze had lost its own ehild!

In that supreme hour when thy harmony sacred
In my sorrowful memory to grief is united,
When thy knell and my heart have only one sound,
Then thy sonorous bronze, high pendent in steeple,
Seems to me when it tolls a pieee of my soul,
In rieh and rare unison touched by an angel!

I say to myself, The eeho of this vibrating bronze,
Before reaching my heart, hath filled every pore

Of the marble where all my dear past doth repose;
Amid the din of the old dome it reverberates still;
Yes, in sweet harmony with this solemn strain resounds
The stone of the sepulchre where sleeps my love!

Be in no way astonished, little bell-boy, if my thought,
Dreamily lulled by thy inverted but resonant urn,
Desires its mystical ringing at funerals so sad;
If, from the first sound that moans under its vault,
I stop, my breath in suspense, to listen to what
Death dares whisper to me in a voice subdued.

Thou alert and faithful trumpeter of human sorrows,
Born of the earth to proclaim better its griefs,
Sing! for the sound of broken hearts is enchanting still!
May thy loud lamentations impart life to the stones,
True tears to dry eyes, strong incentives to prayer,
And to the cold tomb a dolefulness due!

When at last the grave-digger shall throw on my bier
The little dust which still will be left of me here,
After so many deep sighs breathed by me elsewhere;
When the venal convoy of hired and prim mourners
Shall deposit down in the earth my mortal remains,
By grace may I enter the portals of a happier sphere!

If then some pious and loving hand will ring thee,
Grieve no one at all with thy symptoms of sadness;
Nor implore the vale nor the horizon to weep;
But strike thy festival chimes, and on my tomb jingle
With the joyous sound of a chain when it falls
From the limbs of a poor prisoner set free!

IX.

The season itself, in which the almanacs place this Anniversary of the Dead, is in melancholy keeping with the mournful aspects and terrors of all these sepulchres; nature droops and sobs through all her voices; so near the expiration of the year, the elements fret themselves into wailing storms; the equinoctial gale, renewed and pro-

longed, brings with it, in the night, that peculiarly howling tempest which is denominated, from its periodical regularity, THE CHORUS-SQUALL OF THE DEAD; the furious blasts beat the walls, the gusts and whirlwinds carry together, no one knows where, clouds of dead leaves; in the midst of all of which one hears something like the cries and shrieks of distress; also the sinister croakings of the crows and ravens, awakened by the dismal surgings to and fro of the tree-tops.

The more powerful blasts of the tempest shake the roof; and one might suppose that nocturnal and hostile spirits, only freshly and unpropitiously escaped from the tombs, are in terrible conflict with one another, and that what one hears are the vanquished sprites moaning pitilessly in the air. Amidst these mighty roarings, there would seem to be distinct voices, which call us by our several names; half-familiar knockings against the window-panes and the doors, as if to force open, through friendliness, or through violence, the partially deserted chambers which these boisterous souls may have formerly inhabited. Strange as it may seem, I delight in this loud and confused uproar; and I solemnly meditate upon it and upon things in general; yet I do so, as I may confess, with a degree of shuddering emotion, as, by the glimmering light of a winter fire, I recline carelessly upon the stone floor, polished by the gentle steps of those loved ones who are now reposing not far from me.

During this night I purposely surround myself with recollections of all that remains in the house of the dear little properties and mementos of the unreturning absent ones. Eighteen small volumes in manuscript, bound in pasteboard of different colors, are scattered around me; I open sometimes one, sometimes another; I read; I close the book; I open again at random, and examine, among

other things, the years and dates of the writing; I read, and read over again; I smile sadly or I weep; the writing in my hand is the manuscript of my mother.

My mother, as I have already said in my volume of "Confidences," never wrote merely to write, still less to be admired; although she wrote a great deal, apparently, however, only for the purpose of reflecting herself, in a true register of her conscience, and in the domestic events of her daily life,—a moral mirror of her own existence and actions, wherein she would often look at herself, in scrupulous comparison and contrast with what she had been in former times, and with the unceasing desire and effort to become better and better every day. This habit, so to speak, of registering an account with her own heart and soul, she kept up until the end; and it has produced from fifteen to twenty little manuscript volumes of intimate personal confidences, which I have had the happiness to keep with care and safety, and in which I always find her still alive and loving, whenever I experience the necessity of taking refuge once more in her heart!

Yet she did not write with that force of conception, and that relief of image and metaphor, which characterize the ingenuity of expression. She spoke and wrote with natural and unpretentious simplicity, and with the perfect candor and freedom of one who never studied herself. She sought and used only such words as would render her thoughts with precision; as she purchased or prepared her garments only to dress herself, and not to adorn herself. Her superiority was not in her style, but in her beauty and amiability; for it is pre-eminently in the heart that nature has placed the distinctive genius of women; because the works of women are the works of love. It was only by an unusual power of attractive goodness that one ever felt drawn toward her. It was a superiority at

first quite unperceived and always inoffensive, which one did not recognize nor experience but by adoring her.

X.

Possessor as I am of the delicate and priceless treasure of recollections now under consideration, I have often purposed to spread out before myself, at my leisure, this precious manuscript, hid away in the deepest drawer of my desk, and to make from it at least a few brief extracts, accompanied with befitting commentaries for the family; in order that even the little which still remains here below, of the soul of such an excellent mother, may not vanish entirely without having, in some degree, been first breathed and assimilated by her grandchildren. To-night this purpose takes possession of me more strongly than ever before, because of the tolling of the bell which vibrates over her tomb, and which seems to reproach me for remaining silent, when even the cold bronze itself finds a voice to remember her.

The years accumulate; the evening of life approaches; the dust of time begins to tarnish these very leaves, upon which the ink is now turning yellow. I am in one of those rare moments of contemplation, of solitude, of leisure, of twilight, where the thought detaches itself from the cares of active life and ascends quickly to its source, in evenness and smoothness, somewhat like still waters, without wind and without declivity, where it is impossible to discern the current; indeed, it is the hour to accomplish my long-cherished and pious design, and so bring to light, at last, for myself and kindred, this sacred relic.

The greater number of these lines will be read only by the light of the hearth of this mother, and by the eyes which have wept on her account; others have little or no

interest in them. However, of all the varied spectacles which nature or history presents to the eye of a sensitive and considerate man, there can scarcely be one more interesting than the sight of a soul struggling with the circumstances, the joys, the sorrows, the vicissitudes of life; even though the soul in question be only that of a poor and obscure woman, riveted down to the most monotonous of domestic duties, with her rustic husband and children. The drama is not in the scene; it is in the soul. Let a tear drop for the downfall of a great empire or for the destruction of an humble cottage, it is the same water!

XI.

One always wishes to know something of a person whose heart he hears speak. Here, then, is my mother's portrait, such as I find it in my confidential notes as they appear on the first pages of her life:

"Alice de Roy was the maiden name of my good mother. She was the daughter of Monsieur de Roy, Administrator-General of the Finances of the Duke of Orleans. Madame de Roy, his wife, was under-governess of the children of that prince, and a favorite of that beautiful and virtuous Duchess of Orleans whom the Revolution respected even while it expelled her from her palace and led her children away into exile and her husband to the scaffold. Monsieur and Madame de Roy had lodgings at the royal palace in winter and at Saint Cloud in the summer.

"My mother was born there. She was brought up and educated with King Louis Philippe, in that respectful and decorous familiarity which is always established between well-born children of about the same age, sharing the same lessons and the same games. How often has my happy mother entertained us with a recital of the incidents

of the education of that prince, whom one revolution had driven away from his country and another revolution was to exalt upon a throne!

"There is not a fountain, an alley, nor a grass-plot, of the gardens of Saint Cloud that we did not know through her oft-recited recollections of her childhood, even before we had seen them ourselves. Saint Cloud was to her her home, her cradle, the endeared spot where all her first thoughts had germinated, had taken root, and had expanded with the plants and trees of that beautiful park. Many of the most honorable and renowned names of the eighteenth century were the first names which had been impressed on her memory.

"Madame de Roy, the mother of my mother, was a woman of merit. Her duties in the house of the first prince of the blood drew around her a great many of the celebrated and influential personages of that time. Voltaire, on his last journey to Paris, which was an uninterrupted triumph, came to pay a visit to the young princes. My mother, who was then only between seven and eight years of age, was present at the visit; and, though so young, she understood, by the impressions which were awakened around her, that she saw in his person something more than a king. The very attitude of Voltaire, his costume, his cane, his gestures, his words, had been indelibly engraved on this infantile mind, as plainly as the impressions of the fossil remains of the antediluvian creatures in the rocks of our mountains.

"D'Alembert, Laclos, Madame de Genlis, Buffon, Florian, the English historian Gibbon, the German scholar Grimm, Morellet, Necker, the men of letters generally, the philosophers of the time, lived much in the society of Madame de Roy. She had especially maintained friendly relations with the most immortal of them all,

Jean Jacques Rousseau. My mother, though very pious and very strictly attached to the dogmas of the church, had nevertheless formed a very high opinion of this great man; undoubtedly because he was possessed of something more than genius; he was possessed of a soul. She was not a follower of the religion of his head; but she was influenced by a sincere regard for the religion of his heart.

XII.

"The Duke of Orleans, who is also Count of Beaujolais, had the nomination of a certain number of ladies to the Order of Salles, a religious community, which belonged to his duchy. It was thus that my mother became a member of that order, at the age of even less than sixteen years. I still have one of her portraits painted at that age, besides the several pictures of herself, which all her sisters, and my father himself, have so often drawn for us from memory. She is represented in the costume which belonged to her as a canoness. A tall, slender young lady, with a flexible figure, and with beautiful white arms, shown below the elbow, from the narrow sleeves of a black woolen dress. Upon her bosom hangs the little golden cross of the order. Over her black hair falls and waves, on each side of the head, a black lace veil; yet it is less black than her hair. Amidst these sombre colors, it is alone her young and artless countenance that shines with brightness.

"Time has somewhat effaced the bloom of a complexion of only sixteen summers. But the features are as regular and perfect as if the painter's pigments had not yet dried upon the canvas. There is that inward smile of satisfaction; that unvarying tenderness of the soul as seen in the face; and, above all, that ray of serene light so significant of intellect, and so surcharged with gushing

sensibility, that it ran out and radiated sympathetically in every direction, like an eternal caress from her somewhat deep-set eyes, slightly veiled as they were by her half-languid eyelids, as if she deemed it not best to let out at once all the brightness which dwelt in her lustrous orbs of vision.

"One may well understand, on merely beholding this portrait, something of the interest and passion which such a woman must have inspired in my father, and also something of the respect and piety which, in after-days, she was to inspire in her children.

"My father himself, the Chevalier de Lamartine, at this time, by the handsomeness of his person, and by his good qualities, dignity, and charms, was worthy to attach and secure to himself the heart of an affectionate and courageous woman. He was no longer young: he was thirty-eight years of age. Yet for a man of robust ancestry, who was to die still young in mind and body at the age of ninety, with all his teeth, all his hair, and all the severe and imposing beauty which old age allows, thirty-eight years was just the prime of life. His tall figure, his military attitude, his manly features, had all the characteristics of order and command. Unconscious pride and frankness were the two most prominent traits which were reflected in his physiognomy. He affected neither levity nor grace, although his nature was well freighted with both in reserve. With a wonderful flowing of blood in the depths of his heart, he yet seemed cold and indifferent at the surface, because he modestly distrusted himself, and was of a most quiet and retiring disposition.

"There never was in all the world a man who doubted more of his own virtue, or who was more accustomed to clothe with woman-like gentleness the severe perfections

of a hero. For many years I was myself mistaken. I thought him hard and austere, when, in truth, he was only just and exact. With regard to his tastes, they were as simple and primitive as his heart. A patriarch and a soldier; in these characters was combined the whole man. Hunting and rambling in the woods, when he was on a six-months' furlough in the country; the rest of the year, his regiment; his horse; his arms; the regulations scrupulously kept and ennobled by the enthusiasm of a soldier's life; these were his only occupations.

"He could see nothing above his rank of Captain of Cavalry, and the esteem of his comrades. To him his regiment was even more than his family. He desired its honor quite as much as his own. He knew personally, and could call by name, all the officers, all the soldiers, of his regiment. He was adored by them. His profession was his life. Without any other kind of ambition, whether of mere fortune or of any one of the still higher grades or spheres of intellectual achievement, his ideal was only that of being what he was in fact, a good officer. Honor he regarded as the synonym of soul, and the service of the king as a good religion. Fixed in these opinions, nothing pleased him better than to pass six months of his life in a garrisoned town, and the other six months in and about his own little house in the country, with his wife and children. This man of nature, whose primitive instincts and habits had, however, undergone some slight modification in the course of his training as a soldier, was my worthy father.

"The Revolution and other misfortunes, together with the chastening influences of time and reflection, polished and perfected him in his advanced age. I can safely say that I have myself seen his great and self-governed nature strongly develop itself even after he had passed his seven-

tieth year. He was of the race of those giant oaks which renew and enlarge themselves until the very day when the axe is laid to the trunk. Even at eighty years of age he was still perfectly himself.

XIII.

"All the obstacles of fortune and of family prejudices, which opposed themselves to his marriage, were overcome by his own constancy and devotion, and by the affectionate prudence and firmness of my mother. They were united at the very moment when the Revolution was about to break up in France all human establishments, and to convulse and rend the very earth itself upon which they were founded.

"Already the regularly constituted but discontented Assembly was at work. It undermined, as it were, with the force of a superhuman reason, both the privileges and the prejudices upon which the ancient social order of France had so long reposed.

"Already those unduly excited emotions of the people, as violent and irresistible as the waves which the high winds begin to heave, bore down before them, first the palace at Versailles, then the Bastile, and then the City Hall at Paris. But the enthusiasm of the nobility for the great political and religious systems of the France of yore subsisted even yet. Notwithstanding these first severe shocks to which the realm had been subjected, they believed that the agitation and disturbance would be but temporary. In the past they had never had any scale or other standard of measure which would enable them to calculate fairly beforehand the great height which the overflowing of new ideas would be likely to attain.

"My father did not resign his service in the army after his marriage. He could not conceive of anything more

honorable or proper than to follow his flag, to defend the king, to battle against disorder, and to shed his blood, if necessary, in the discharge of his duty. Those first tokens of a terrible tempest which was to overthrow a throne, and to cause tremblings and tumults throughout Europe during half a century at least, affected but slightly my newly-married father and mother, who were just then wrapped up in the first joys of their perfect love, and with bright hopes of undiminished happiness in the future.

"I remember having one day seen a branch of a willow separated from its trunk by the storm and floating down the current of the Saône. A female nightingale, governed by motherly instincts and devotion, sat yet on her swimming nest, adrift in the foam of the river, while the male, flying excitedly and affectionately, followed his love upon the wreck.

XIV.

"Scarcely had my newly-wedded parents entered upon the full enjoyment of the happiness for which they had so long looked, when it seemed to be necessary to interrupt it, and to have to be separated, perhaps, alas, never to meet again! It was the period of emigration, voluntary or compulsory. At this epoch emigration was not precisely what it was somewhat later, when it was so largely resorted to as a means of avoiding persecution and death. A sort of universal fashion of expatriation had seized the French nobility. The example set by the princes became contagious. Whole regiments lost their officers in a single night. It was a shame, for a certain time, to remain where the king and France were.

"Great decision of mind and great firmness of character were necessary to resist this epidemic folly (not to say cowardice), which strangely enough took the name of honor. My father had the peculiar courage requisite in

this emergency; he refused to emigrate. Only when they exacted from the officers of the army an oath which was repugnant to his conscience as a servant of the king, did he tender his resignation. But the 10th of August was approaching; one felt it coming fast.

"Quite well was it known beforehand that the palace of the Tuileries would be attacked, and that the tenure of the king's authority would be endangered. It was also hoped and believed that the constitution of 1791, a momentary compact of conciliation between the representatives of royalty and the sovereign people, would be overthrown and consigned to oblivion. The devoted friends of what yet remained of the monarchy, and the men personally and religiously attached to the king, united themselves to strengthen the Constitutional Guard of Louis XVI., and on the day of peril they faithfully ranged themselves around him. My father was of the number of those true-hearted men.

"My mother was then bearing me unborn. She made no effort to detain my father at home. Even in the midst of her grief and tears, she could never understand or value life without honor, nor did she ever hesitate a moment between a distress and a duty; she would endure the distress and perform the duty.

"My father's departure was almost equally without hope and without hesitation. He fought together with the Constitutional Guard and with the Swiss to defend the palace. When Louis XVI. abandoned his castle the battle became a massacre. My father was wounded by a shot in the garden of the Tuileries. He escaped, momentarily, but was arrested while crossing the river, opposite the Invalides, and taken to Vaugirard, where he was imprisoned several hours in a cellar. He was there demanded and released by the gardener of one of his relatives, who

was a municipal officer of the Commune. Having thus escaped death, he returned to my mother, and lived with her in profound obscurity, secluded in the country, until the evil days when the rancorous madness of revolutionary persecution left no other place of refuge to those who adhered to the old system than imprisonment or the scaffold.

XV.

"One night the populace came to tear away from their home my grandfather, in spite of his eighty years, my grandmother, almost as aged and infirm, my two uncles, and my two aunts, who were nuns, and who had already been driven out of their convent. All the family were crowded pell-mell into a common cart, and escorted by policemen, who led them, amidst the coarse and vulgar hootings of a mob, to Autun. There an immense prison had been erected to receive all the suspected persons of the province. My father, for a particular reason known only to his enemies, was separated from the rest of the family and shut up in the prison of Mâcon. My mother, who, at the time, was nursing me, was left alone in my grandfather's mansion, which was watched over by a small company of soldiers of the revolutionary army.

"Can any one wonder that the men whose lives date from those sinister days have brought with them into the world a predisposition to sadness, or that thus Melancholy itself has, of late, come to be largely intermingled with French genius? Virgil, Cicero, Tibullus, and Horace also, who impressed upon Roman genius the distinctive qualities of infelicity and solemnity, were they not born during the great civil wars of Rome, and within sound of the shocking proscriptions of Marius, of Sylla, and of Cæsar? Let us think for a moment, and without prudery, of the impressions of terror and of pity which convulsed

the frames of the war-oppressed Roman mothers whilst they bore those men, as embryos, in their wombs. Ay, let us think also, however vaguely or dreamily, of the milk, embittered with tears, which, as an infant, I myself took from my mother; whilst the whole family were in a captivity which promised relief only in death; whilst, indeed, the loving and lion-hearted husband whom she adored was upon the very steps of the scaffold, and she herself a captive in a lonely house guarded by malicious soldiers, who, counting her tears as so many crimes against themselves and their masters, scrupled not to insult her great grief.

XVI.

"On the premises of my grandfather, and very near to his mansion, which extended from one street to the other, there stood a low and sombre little house, which communicated with the mansion by a dark passage and by small narrow and damp court-yards. This house served to lodge old servants who had been wholly or partly retired from the service of my grandfather, but who were still held to the family by small pensions which they continued to receive, and by some slight services gratuitously rendered by them from time to time to their old and young masters and mistresses. These supernumerary assistants were a kind of freed Romans, such as most of the better families in France had the happiness to have. When the mansion itself was brought under the mandate of sequestration, my mother retired, with one or two women, into this little house. Yet there is still another reason why she went there.

"Exactly opposite the windows of this cottage, on the other side of the dark lane, silent and narrow, like a street in Genoa, there arose, and still arises to-day, a high wall,

pierced by the peculiar apertures of an ancient convent of the Ursulines. A building austere in its aspect, and as unostentatious and simple in all respects as its mission, it yet had the imposing and beautiful front of an adjacent church on one of its sides, and in the rear large and deep court-yards and a spacious garden surrounded by strong black walls, whose height repressed all thought of venturing over them. As the common jails and dungeons of the town already overflowed with captives, the revolutionary tribunal of Mâcon had this convent arranged and occupied as an additional prison. Chance or Providence caused my father to be incarcerated in the new Bastile here described.

"There was thus between happiness and himself only a wall and the width of a street. Another chance would have it that this convent of the Ursulines should be as well known to him, in all its details, as his own private house. One of my grandfather's sisters, whose name was Madame de Lusy, was Abbess of the Ursulines of Mâcon. Her brother's children in their early days came regularly and constantly to play in the convent. There was no alley in the garden, no cellar, no private staircase, no garret, no lumber-room nor air-hole, that was not well known to them. Nor was there any part of the structure, within or without, of which their infantile memories had not retained even the most minute details.

"Thrown suddenly into this prison, my father found himself in a perfectly well-known place. To crown his happiness, the jailer (a not over-resentful sort of republican) had, fifteen years previously, been a cuirassier in my father's troop. This man's new grade of service did not change his heart. Accustomed to respect and to love his captain, he was visibly and favorably affected on thus meeting him again after the lapse of so many years;

and when the doors of the Ursulines were closed upon the prisoner, it was the jailer who wept.

"My father found himself there in good company, and with no lack of companions in captivity. The convent contained about two hundred prisoners, not one of whom, however, had committed any crime; they were only the most prominent of the suspected people of the province. They were crowded to excess in the halls of the refectories and in the corridors of the old convent. My father asked the jailer, as an especial favor, to put him in the garret. A high dormer-window opening upon the street would at least afford him the opportunity and consolation of scanning occasionally, through the iron grating, the familiar roof of his own house. This favor was granted him without hesitation. He installed himself in the garret, with nothing movable about him but some loose planks and a miserable pallet. In the daytime he would come down with his fellow-captives, to take his meals, to play cards, and to talk about the affairs of the country; in regard to which, however, the prisoners could do little else than make conjectures, as they were not permitted any written communication from without. But this isolation and espionage did not long affect my father with great grief.

"The same sentiment which had impelled him to solicit the jailer for a cell opening to the street, and which kept him whole hours looking toward the roof of his little house opposite, had also inspired my mother with the thought of ascending often to the garret of that same little house, and there seating herself somewhat behind the window, so as to see without being seen. Once there, she would eagerly gaze through her tears upon the roof of the prison, where he whom she loved so well, having been ruthlessly torn away from her, had been hid-

den from her eyes. Two thoughts, two souls that long and sigh for each other through the universe, are not unapt to meet again. Over only two neighboring walls and one narrow street, could their eyes fail of simultaneous and joyful recognition? Their hearts were mutually moved; their thoughts and wishes were well understood by each other; and their signs supplied the place of words because it was feared that their voices, if used, might reveal their communications and designs to the wary sentinels on the street. Seated opposite each other, they thus passed several hours regularly every day. Their whole souls had respectively passed into their eyes.

"My mother first conceived the idea of writing concise lines in large letters, containing, in few words, what she wished to make known to the loved and loving prisoner. He answered by signs. From that very moment their correspondence was established. My father, in his honorary capacity of a Knight of the Arquebuse, had in his house a bow with arrows, with which I had often played in my childhood. My mother contrived to use them as a means of communicating more freely and fully with my father. She practiced several days in her chamber, shooting at a target with an arrow; and when she had become sufficiently skilled in its use to be certain of not missing her aim at a distance of several yards, she attached a small but long and strong string to an arrow, which, by means of the bow, she then shot forward into the window of the prisoner. My father quickly and dexterously concealed the arrow, and then, hastily drawing the string toward him, he drew up a letter.

"In this way, favored by the darkness of the night, paper, pens, and even ink, and other small articles of stationery, were passed to him. He replied at leisure. My mother, on her own side, would come before the

break of day to get the long letters in which her captive husband poured out his love and his sadness, and in which he kindly interrogated, advised, and consoled his wife, and spoke also of his child. My poor mother brought me in her arms, every day, to the garret, where she would show me to my father, nursing me before him, and making me hold my two little hands toward the grate of the prison; then, pressing my face against her bosom, she would, in an ecstasy of affection, almost devour me with kisses, addressing thus to the prisoner all the caresses with which she covered me for his sake.

XVII.

"It was about that time that the Proconsuls of the Convention divided and shared among themselves the provinces of France, and exercised over them, in the name of the public good, an absolute and often sanguinary power. The fortunes, the lives, and even the deaths of whole families, depended on a word of those representatives, on an emotion of their hearts, or on a signature of their hands. My mother, who felt that the sword was actually suspended over the head of her husband, whom she idolized, had several times been inclined to go and throw herself at the feet of the nearest and most powerful representatives of the Convention, and to implore them for the liberty of my father. Her youth, her beauty, her loneliness, the child that she carried at her breast, and the advice even of my father, had until then restrained her from that purpose. But the earnest entreaties of other members of the family, also immured in the dungeons of Autun, imperiously demanded a step no less humiliating to her pride than to her opinions. From the revolutionary authorities of Mâcon she obtained a passport for Dijon and for Lyons.

"How often has she narrated to me her reluctance, her discouragement, her terrors, when finally it became necessary, after innumerable applications and solicitations peremptorily rejected, for her to appear again and again, trembling, in the presence of representatives of the people, on a mission so very important to herself and others, and yet so delicate! Sometimes it was a blunt and brutal man, who would sternly refuse to listen to this woman in tears, and who would hastily and passionately dismiss her with threats, as if she were guilty of a desire to relax the justice of the nation. Sometimes it was an amiable and tender-hearted man, whom the sight of such deep affection and such woeful despair inclined, in spite of himself, to pity, but whom the presence of his colleagues hardened in appearance; so that he would deny with his lips what he yet granted with his heart.

"The representative Javogue was the only one of all these Proconsuls who left on the mind of my mother a very good impression of his character. Having been introduced to him at Dijon, he spoke to her with manly kindness and respect. She had brought me in her arms to the drawing-room of this representative, in order that pity might touch him in two ways: first, in the suffering of a young mother; and, second, in the misfortune of an innocent child. Javogue invited her to a seat, and then himself complained of the rigor which his functions and the safety of the republic imposed upon him. He took me somewhat awkwardly upon his knees, and as my mother made a movement of fright, in the apprehension that he might let me fall, he said, 'Fear nothing, my good woman; the republicans also have children.' And as I, in my unsophisticated babyhood, smilingly played with the ends of his tricolored scarf, he remarked to my mother, 'Thy little son is very beautiful to be the child

of an aristocrat. Bring him up for the country, and make of him a citizen.' He then gave her some encouraging words, of much interest to my father, and held out some faint hopes of an approaching liberty. It may be that it was to Javogue that my father owed his having been forgotten in his prison; for an order of trial, in those times, was itself equivalent to a sentence of death.

"Returning to Mâcon, and there re-entering her little house, she herself lived imprisoned, as it were, in her own narrow home, just opposite the Ursulines. From time to time, when the moon was absent, and the night very dark, and the street-lamps blown out by a winter's wind, the knotted string silently slipped across the street from one window to the other; and so my father would pass anxious but delightful hours near to the one being upon earth whom he most loved.

"Eighteen long months were thus passed.

"The ninth of Thermidor opened all the prisons. My father was free. My mother hastened to Autun for his old and infirm parents, and brought them back to their long-closed home. Soon after their return, however, my grandfather and my grandmother died, in peace and full of years, sorrowfully attended by the fullest sympathy and kindness of both family and friends. They had weathered together the great tempest of life, and had been severely shaken by it, but not overthrown. They had not suffered the loss of any one of their children, and they hoped and prayed, on closing their eyes, that Heaven's wrath was appeased for a long time to come, and that life itself would thenceforth be smoother and sweeter for those to whom they had transmitted their names before leaving the earth.

XVIII.

"The fortune of my grandfather, by his own intentions and in accordance with the usages of the times, was to have passed entirely into the possession of his eldest son. But the new system of government having repealed the law of primogeniture and forbidden all practices of entailment, and having also rendered nugatory all such vows of poverty and religion as had been taken by my aunts, my father's sisters, the surviving members of the family, finding at once their rights and their duties before the law, proceeded immediately to an equitable division of the estate. The landed property of this estate was considerable, both in Doubs and in Burgundy. My father, on asking his share, like his brothers and sisters, might perhaps with one word have changed his fate and secured one of the beautiful territorial possessions which the family were about to divide among them. Yet his scrupulous regard for his father's will prevented him from even dreaming of violating it after his death. The revolutionary proceedings which resulted in the abrogation of the law of primogeniture were of very recent date; and although he considered those proceedings in that respect entirely just, still they had in his eyes an appearance of disrespect, if not of violence, done to paternal authority. To ask for the application of the new law in his favor against his eldest brother seemed to him like an attempt to take advantage of his position.

"Without at all contending for his legal rights, he voluntarily renounced the purpose of inheriting any part of the landed estates of his father and mother, and declared himself well satisfied with only the very moderate means of support which his contract of marriage had secured for himself and family. He deliberately made

himself poor, having but one word to say to make himself rich. The property of the family was immediately divided, each of his brothers and sisters having received an ample share. He would have nothing; only he retained as his own absolute property the little estate of Milly, which they had assigned to him on his marriage, and which then yielded an income of only about five hundred and forty dollars per annum.

"My mother's dowry was moderate. The salaries of the offices which her father and her brothers had held in the House of Orleans had entirely disappeared with the Revolution. The princesses of the royal family of France were in exile. They sometimes wrote to my mother. They kindly and affectionately remembered the friendship of their childhood with the daughter of their under-governess. Even in their prolonged exile they did not cease to remind my mother that she had a warm and ever-abiding place in their memory, nor did they forget to send her, occasionally, unique and precious mementos of their loving regards.

XIX.

"My father did not feel himself relieved, by the Revolution, of his obligation of fidelity to his banner. His honor, as he believed, was inseparably connected with the flag of France of the old régime. This sentiment closed every avenue to any probable increase of his fortune. An income of only five hundred and forty dollars a year, and a small, dilapidated and almost empty house in the country, for himself, his wife, and his several children, who were already beginning to be seated in goodly numbers at the family table, was a condition of things not easily definable between frugal ease and pinching poverty. Yet he had the great satisfaction of an approving conscience; his love for his wife and children; the rural

simplicity of his tastes; his rigid but generous economy; the almost perfect conformity of his wants with his situation and circumstances; and, in a word, his implicit and religious faith in God. With these he courageously met all the straits and difficulties of his existence.

"Young, beautiful, brought up amid all the elegances of a splendid court, my mother, with her accustomed smiling resignation and with her invariable inward happiness, passed from the gorgeous apartments and gardens of a princely mansion to the small and unfurnished chambers of a house which had been vacant for nearly a century, and to a garden of only the fourth of an acre, fenced in with rugged rocks, where all the beautiful and romantic dreams of her youth were to be measured in contrast with the realities of life. I have often heard both of my parents say that, notwithstanding the insufficiency of their fortune, these first years of calm, after the perilous tossings of the storms of the Revolution,—these peaceful years of retirement in their love and of their general enjoyment of themselves in this rural solitude,—were, in the main, the happiest years of their lives.

"My mother had to endure the inconveniences of much poverty, yet she always despised riches. How often has she said to me, in later years, pointing with her finger to the narrow boundaries of the garden and of the fields of Milly, 'Our estate is very small, but it is large enough if we will only learn how to accommodate our wants to our circumstances. Happiness depends so much upon the just accounts we keep with our own consciences, and upon our kindly dispositions and actions toward one another, that we could hardly increase it for ourselves by adding to the boundaries of either our meadows or our vineyards. Happiness is not measured by the acre

like the earth, it is measured by the gentleness and resignation of the heart; for God has ordained that, in the grand consummation of events, the poor shall have as much and be quite as felicitous as the rich; and this to the end that, in the better future, no one may ever have the need or the inclination to seek favors of any being less perfect or less powerful than Himself.' "

XX.

Here I find the portrait of my mother at thirty-eight years of age; these are the outlines:

"It is night; the doors of the little country house are closed. A friendly dog barks, from time to time, in the front yard. The autumn rain patters against the window-panes of the two lower windows; and the gale, blowing in spasmodic squalls, or breaking against the repellent branches of two or three sycamores, and penetrating between the interstices of the window-shutters, produces those intermittent and melancholy hissings of the winds which can be well heard only on the borders of the great pine-woods, when one seats himself at their feet to listen to them.

"The chamber where I thus find myself again is large enough, but almost bare. In the back part of it there is a deep alcove, with a bed in it. The curtains of this bed are of white serge, with blue squares; it is the bed of my mother. There are two cradles, upon wooden rockers, at the foot of this bed,—one large, the other small; these are the cradles of my younger sisters, who have been already sleeping more than an hour. A large fire of vine-fuel burns in the back of a fire-place of white stone.

"One may here see how the hammer of the Revolution has cracked the mantel-piece in several places, defacing the arms and the lily-flowers of the ornaments. The

sheet of wrought iron of the fire-grate is turned inside out, because, undoubtedly, the arms of the king were sketched on the surface of the other side. Great beams, blackened by the smoke, as well as the planks which they support immediately below the roof, constitute the ceiling. Under our feet there is neither board floor nor carpet, but only plain squares of unpolished bricks. These bricks are of the color of the earth, and are broken into a thousand pieces by the wood-shod and iron-heeled country clowns, who had made of it their dancing-room during the imprisonment of my father. There is no tapestry, nor painted paper, on the walls of the chamber; nothing but the plaster, broken here and there, showing the naked stones of the walls, somewhat as one may see at times the limbs and the joints of a beggar through a torn dress.

"In one corner of the chamber there is a small harpsichord, opened, with music-books, including the 'Wizard of the Village,' by Jean Jacques Rousseau, scattered at random over the instrument. Nearer the fire, in the middle of the room, stands a small card-table, covered with a green cloth, all spotted with ink, and full of holes. Upon the table are two candlesticks of plated copper; and in these are burning two tallow candles, which throw a dim and flickering light, visibly agitated by the air, upon the whitewashed walls of the apartment.

"Opposite the fire-place, his elbow resting upon the table, sits a man, who is holding in his hands a book, which he is reading with close attention. His high stature and his robust body are pleasingly conspicuous; he still preserves all the health and strength of his vigorous youth. His open countenance, his blue eyes, his firm and gracious smile, his dazzling white teeth, these are all natural characteristics of the man. Some remain-

ing articles of his former costume, his head-dress especially, and a certain military stiffness of attitude, attest the retired officer. If one were inclined to doubt this conclusion, it would only be necessary to look at his sword, his army pistols, his helmet, and the gilded clasps of his charger's bridle, which glitter suspended from a nail projecting from the back wall of a small closet opening into the room. This man is my father.

"Upon a braided rattan sofa, in the corner which contains the fire-place and a small alcove, is seated a woman, who, though she still looks very young, already verges closely on thirty-eight years. Her tall figure has yet all the flexibility and all the elegance of a young girl. Her features are so delicate; her black eyes have such a candid and penetrating glance; one can plainly perceive, under the slightly pale tissue of her transparent skin, the blue veins, and the changeable coloring of her least and simplest emotions. Her very black and very fine hair falls down over her cheeks to her shoulders, so wavy, so curly, and so coquettish, that it would be almost impossible for a stranger to tell whether she is only eighteen or thirty-eight years of age. Yet no one would now wish to take off from her age any one of her years, which only serve to perfect her physiognomy and complete her beauty.

"This beauty of my mother, so faultless in each separate feature, is particularly striking when observed in its usual fullness. It is a type of beauty which, from the cultivated and artistic eye, invariably receives admiration by its harmony, by its grace, and, above all, by that radiance of inward tenderness and love which so plainly reveals the outcroppings of a sanctified soul. For, for the soul itself, the seat of beauty and goodness, as thus dimly seen in outline, the most beautiful face in the world is

of itself only an outward and most imperfect manifestation.

"This young woman, now half reclining upon a cushion, holds in her arms a little girl, gently sleeping, with her head upon her shoulders. Wound around her tiny fingers, the child still holds, engrasped, one of the black tresses of her mother's hair, with which she was playing only a moment ago, ere she fell asleep. Another little girl, older than the one just mentioned, is seated upon a footstool, near the end of the sofa; she rests her golden-haired head upon her mother's knees. This young woman is my mother; these two children are my elder sisters. Two others are in their cradles."

XXI.

Such was the every-day life of the family at the time when my mother recommenced her journal, on the 11th of June, 1801. It would seem that, in her youth, and, indeed, from her very childhood, she had been in the habit of making records of family confidences of this sort, registering them especially for herself; evidently impelled to it by a species of childish rivalry with the more advanced pupils of Madame de Genlis, at the Royal Palace, where she herself was educated. The journal reopens thus:

"In early life I had begun to keep an exact journal of everything that happened to me or around me, and to note down all the ideas and reflections which the various events of my life would suggest to me. That journal I destroyed, and, for a long while past, have been quite a stranger to the habit of keeping a diary. Yet I have repented, and am heartily sorry for what I did, because I am of the opinion that, sooner or later, the diary so begun might have been useful. It is now my intention to begin

again, and, with God's grace, to write, as may be convenient, at the close of every day, the different events and experiences through which I may have passed, and also whatever right or wrong thing I may have done. This, I think, will help me to make the necessary examination of my conscience, and better acquaint me with the general condition of my own soul. Moreover, it occurs to me that if, at any time, my children should, by chance or choice, read this journal, it will not, for themselves alone, be entirely devoid of interest. Besides, it may perhaps be of some service to them after my days upon the earth shall be numbered, because it is my purpose to speak pointedly and distinctively of each and every one of them, and of their different characteristics.

"At this very time I have five children living and one in the grave,—four girls and one boy, whose name is Alphonse. He is now far away from me, beginning his classical studies at Lyons. He is a very good and amiable child. May God make him truthful, just, wise, and pious! For him, my youthful son, I most humbly offer up to Heaven this heartfelt prayer with all the ardor of my soul. My eldest daughter is named Cecilia. She is seven and a half years old, and is extremely quick and blithesome. Her disposition and ways are truly sweet and winsome. Eugenia, her sister, is five and a half years old. She evinces an unusual susceptibility of nature, and is possessed of an excellent heart. Césarine is two years old. Suzanne is a tender little plant, only nine months of age, and her I am still nursing.

"The proper education and training of these four daughters will certainly be no small task. Were it not for God's help, in whom I put all my trust, I should at once despair of ever being able to accomplish it; but it seems as if I may do almost anything and everything

through Him who strengthens me, and who is sometimes pleased to manifest His power and glory in certain of the very weakest of His creatures. . . . In addition to the several members of my own family at home, I have with me an infirm female relative, very feeble in both body and mind. Duties of kinship would seem to require me to look after her as my sixth child, and to treat her with the same degree of care and tenderness that I am accustomed to bestow on my own precious baby at the breast. Besides all these, there are in and about the house six servants, upon every one of whom I have to keep a constant eye. O helpful Heaven, how much need have I of thy assistance!

"My husband and myself live almost always at Milly, where I am, with rare exceptions, delighted to be. At no great distance from Milly we have recently acquired another place, Saint Point. This also is a good property, situated in an agreeable, pleasant country, where, at our option, we can enjoy any amount of retirement and solitude behind the mountains. What a full measure of gratitude do we not owe to Providence!

"My sister (Madame de Vaux) has arrived to-day from Lyons. By nature, and without any effort on her own part, she is truly of an angelic sweetness, and of far more than the average merit among the women of her time. She has brought me tidings of my Alphonse. His teachers speak well of him. God bless him, as I bless him from the very depths of my heart! To-morrow, in the capacity of both mother and teacher, I am to begin to give lessons to my little girls. I shall have need of much patience and assiduity.

"After dinner a neighbor came to tell me that a poor, half-forsaken old man, who lived in a hut in the mountain, where he had only a goat for companionship, and

whose general wants I had long supplied, had just died. I was much grieved at this intelligence, and severely reproached myself for having neglected for several days to visit the indigent recluse. Yet my failure to see him was because of his being so far away. It is true that I supposed he had recovered from the particular illness of which I knew he was suffering; yet, considering his age, I ought not to have relied so implicitly on this. I feel now that it was my duty to take better care of him. My heart accuses and reproves me. I suffer compunctions of conscience. In truth, I have not enough perseverance in the little amount of good that I am enabled to do. I tire too quickly and too often in well-doing. With too great facility I allow myself to be overcome by these spells of absent-mindedness and weariness, which, if they be not faults, are yet weaknesses; and these are prejudicial to a holy use of time. For to what end has time itself been given to us? Was it not given that we might at least diligently and faithfully try, every day and every hour, to bring something good to God, to others, and to ourselves? . . .

"This evening my husband, my two eldest daughters, and myself took a walk together through our vineyards, now in full bloom, and the whole air was delightfully perfumed with their fragrance. Our vineyards bring us the only income we have for ourselves, for our children, for our servants, and for the poor of our neighborhood, who frequently come to us for favors. If but one-half of the beautiful and fragrant blossoms before our eyes will only yield us good grapes, we shall be quite fortunate this year. May Providence preserve them from the violent and destructive hail-storms which are not uncommon in France at this season!

"Continuing our walk, we went by the lonely little

hut, above our vineyards, where the poor old man died this morning. I desired to go in to see him once more and to pray by his bedside; but my husband thought it best that I should not do so, as he wished to shield from the eyes of myself and our little ones a spectacle which would inevitably have made a very sad impression upon us. I really felt like asking pardon of the soul of the lifeless hermit for not having been there to repeat to him words of hope and of comfort during his agony, and to listen respectfully and sympathetically to his last sigh. The door was open, and his bereaved goat did nothing but go in and out excitedly, bleating mournfully all the while, as if imploring help in its own distress. The absolute disconsolateness of the poor animal caused us all to weep. I asked and obtained the consent of my husband that we should send for it in the morning, after the burial, and that we should give it a good home with our cow and the two little sheep belonging to the children."

In these first pages of the first volume of this little journal we get something more than a mere glimpse of the daily life of this young woman, previously educated in the superb residences of the richest prince in Europe, and afterward transplanted, by the love which she entertained for her husband and children, far into the country, where we find her and them, in the most straitened circumstances, at a distance of three hundred miles from Paris. Should any one desire an exact idea of the little house at Milly, where my mother had secluded herself, in both winter and summer, in the regular and happy discharge of her domestic duties, he may find a prosaic description of it in my own confidential writings, and also a poetic description in one of my metrical harmonies, entitled "My Native Land." Here follows what I said about it eighteen years ago in my "Confidences":

XXII.

"Leaving the right bank of the river Saône, which runs through the middle of the green meadows, and meanders along the fertile hillocks, of Mâcon, and going in the direction of that town, and toward the ruins of the old Abbey of Cluny, where Abelard died, one follows an uneven route over the undulations of a soil which soon begins to magnify itself to the eye like the first waves of a swelling sea. To the right and to the left may be seen a goodly number of white hamlets in the midst of the various vineyards. Above these hamlets, bare and uncultivated mountains, of unattractive altitude, extend themselves in the forms of sloping planes and gray lawns, where one perceives, like white specks, a few sheep of rare size and superior quality. All the mountains hereabout are crowned with rugged and abrupt rocks, which are partly imbedded in the earth, and whose curious notches, caused by the fantastic disintegrations of time, present to the eye the quaint forms and fissures of old dismantled castles. Following the route that leads along the base of the hills most prominently in view, one enters, on the left side, a narrow little path, shaded by willows. Further on, meadows appear on either side of a swift-murmuring stream whose dammed-up waters, a mile lower down, turn perpetually the wheels of a grist-mill.

"Our road now winds, for a moment, under the alder-bushes, by the side of the rivulet which here, in times of freshets, overflows its banks, and inundates the road, to so great a depth as to become temporarily impassable. Now, however, we cross the water easily and pleasantly over a little bridge, and then go forward, gradually ascending a winding way until we arrive in sight of a number of small houses covered with red tiles, which we see grouped

above us upon a table-land of limited area. That is our village. A steeple of gray stone, in the form of a pyramid, rises perceptibly above only seven or eight of the humble habitations of the people. The rocky road zigzags from door to door between the cottages. At the end of our road we come to a gate, somewhat larger than most of the others which we have just passed. This gate is the opening to a grove and a court-yard, at the further end of which is secluded my father's house.

"The house is, indeed, quite hidden away; for one can see it neither from the one side nor from the other; neither from the village nor from the high-road. Built in the bowl of a large curve in the border of the valley, and overlooked by the steeple, by the roofs of the rustic structures, and by the trees, and, withal, being under the shadow of a moderately high mountain, it is only by climbing up the mountain, and by then stopping and looking back, that we can see, down below us, this low but massive house which, at the extremity of a narrow garden, takes upon itself the appearance of a large landmark of dark-colored stone.

"The house is square. It has only one story above the entrance. There are three large windows on each side. The walls are not plastered. The rain and the moss have combined to impart to the stones the quaint and sombre aspect of the cloisters of an old abbey. On the side of the court-yard we enter the house through an elaborately carved wooden door. This door is placed over a large stoop of five steps of freestone. But the stones of the stoop, though of unusually large size, have been so badly broken off at the corners, so deeply worn away on the upper surfaces, and so generally cracked and split by time and usage, that they are now quite disunited and rickety; so that, while walking over them, one hears under the

feet a hollow and uncertain sound. Out of the wider fissures of these stones grow nettles and wallworts; and the little summer frogs, with their voices so sweet and melancholy, sing there at night as merrily as if they were in a swamp.

"Our first entrance is into a spacious and well-lighted corridor, whose width, however, is diminished by large closets and cupboards of carved walnut, wherein are kept the linen of the household and the bags of flour and grain necessary for the daily wants of the family. To the left is the kitchen, whose door, always open, shows a long oaken table surrounded by benches. It is but seldom, indeed, that one may not see seated at the table some countrymen at any and all hours of the day, for the table-cloth is always spread, if not for the workmen, then for the innumerable and unexpected guests, to whom, in a country like this, away from towns, and where there are neither hotels nor other public houses, it is customary to offer bread and cheese. To the left we go into the dining-room. Nothing decorates this apartment but a pine table, a few chairs, and a sideboard with divisions, drawers, and numerous shelves; this last-mentioned article of furniture being a thing hereditary in almost all the old homesteads of France, and which the taste of the present times has rendered even more fashionable than ever before, by creating for them a brisk and universal demand. From the dining-room we step into the parlor, which has two windows, one of which opens upon the yard, while the other, on the north side, opens upon the garden. A wooden staircase, which my father afterward had replaced with one of stones roughly cut, takes us up into the second and last story, which is low and dingy. Here we find ten small rooms, almost without furniture, opening within upon dark passage-ways. These rooms

were used as sleeping-apartments for the family, for the guests, and for the domestics.

"Such is the interior of the house which has sheltered us for so long a time within its warm but sombre walls. Such is the castle—if castle it may be called—which my mother with so much love denominated her Jerusalem, her mansion of peace. Such is the domicile in which, during childhood and youth, we were tenderly and lovingly protected from the rain, from cold, from hunger, from the blasts of winter, and from rough collision with the world. Such is the abode where death came to take by turns the father and the mother, and from where the children have successively taken flight; these for one place; those for another; some for eternity. . . .

"Preciously do I preserve whatever still remains of this old homestead, even the straw, the grass, and the moss; and although the house is now vacant, deserted and chilled, and devoid of all those affectionate words and caresses which animated it of yore, yet I always have a melancholy pleasure in seeing it again. Even yet I take delight in sleeping there sometimes, because on waking, every now and then, it seems to me as if I can hear my mother's voice, my father's footsteps, my sister's joyful songs, and all those innocent and cheerful noises of youth, of life and of love, which now resound for me alone under the old beams, and which have, alas, in these later times, no one left but myself to bear testimony to the rareness of their harmony and sweetness.

XXIII.

"The exterior of the house corresponds with its interior. On the side of the yard the view extends uninterruptedly only to the wine-presses, the fuel-houses, and

the stables. The gate of the yard, being always open to the street of the village, shows, from morning till night, the peasants going to or returning from their fields of labor. These tillers of the soil carry their implements on one shoulder, and sometimes on the other a long cradle or basket in which is sleeping one of their younger children. The wife follows her husband to the vineyard, carrying her baby at her breast. A nanny-goat, with her little kid, follows after them. The kid stops a moment to play with the dogs, near the gate, and then bounds back to rejoin its mother.

"On the other side of the street there is a lime-kiln which is always smoking, and which is a place of general resort for old men, for poor spinning-women, and for idle children, who warm and amuse themselves by its fire, which is never extinguished. This is all that we can see from one of the parlor windows.

"The other window, opening to the north, permits our eyes to glance over the walls of the garden, and to rest upon the tiles of a number of small houses beyond. Still further onward we observe, in the distance, a horizon of dull-colored mountains, which are almost always cloudy, and from which, in one place lighted up by the rays of a brilliant sun and in another shaded by angular masses of moving fog, there not unfrequently arise, in appearance, new cities in progress and old castles in ruins. These are characteristic traits of this landscape; and but for the deceptive and fantastic figures thus presented by the clouds, and but for the clouds themselves, there would be before our eyes only a black mountain and a yellowish ravine. A stage-coach on a plain, a windmill on a hillock, is in itself a landscape. The earth is only a theatre for observation and action; the thought, the drama, and even life itself, in all its phases,

are precisely as man himself makes them. Wherever there is life there is interest.

"The rear of the house adjoins the garden, which is a small inclosure of brown earth of the fourth of an acre. At the further corner of the garden the mountain begins to rise imperceptibly; the nearer part of which is cultivated and green, with occasional vineyards; but at a point more distant it is wild, rough, and unproductive, yielding little else than detached tufts of moss, which, with the least quantity of fertile soil, grow upon the rocks and scarcely attract attention. At the summit of the mountain a slight indentation is apparent. Not a tree, not even a shrub, rises above the few sprigs of heath which grow over it. Not a cot, not even a curl of smoke, imparts to it a sign of life. It is so barren, so desolate! Yet, who knows but that these very defects of nature constitute, in part at least, the secret charm of this garden? It is somewhat like a child's cradle which the wife of the laborer has placed in a deep furrow of the field while she works. The two sides of the furrow hide the sides of the cradle, and when the curtain is lifted the child can see only a vertical part of the sky between the two undulations of the ground.

"With regard to the garden itself, as a garden, it is worthy of little else than the name. It could never have been fitly called a garden except in those primitive days when Homer described the modest inclosure and the seven prairies of the old man Laertes. Eight diminutive beds of vegetables, cut at right angles; bordered by fruit trees; separated by alleys of common herbs and yellow sand; at the extremity of these alleys, to the north, eight tortuous trunks of old yóke-elms, which form a gloomy arbor over a wooden bench; another smaller bower near the further left-hand corner of the garden, interwoven

with running vines of Judea, under two tall cherry-trees; all these things constitute the principal features of the inclosure; they make up the garden. Just here, however, I was about to forget to mention something else not altogether out of place in this connection; yet I do not allude to a murmuring spring, on the one hand, nor even to a noiseless well, with its damp and greenish stones, on the other. On no part of the earth around me is there one drop of water, save only in the little reservoirs excavated by my father in the solid rocks to receive the showers of rain. Around these pools of green and stagnant water there are twelve sycamores and several plane-trees, which overshadow a corner of the garden behind the walls, and which cover with their large yellow leaves the scummy surface of the basin.

"Yes, these are all the mentionable things that were there; only these, and nothing more. Yet these humble possessions were amply sufficient during a long period of years to secure the contentment and happiness, to brighten the day-dreams and to sweeten the hours of labor and leisure and sleep of a father, of a mother, and of eight children! And this is the property which still suffices to awaken the most endearing and delightful memories in the breasts of the surviving members of the family. To them this property is the very Eden of their childhood, where their most placid thoughts always take shelter whenever they wish to refresh themselves again with a few drops of the morning dew of life, or to bask once more in the genial rays of that beam of natal light which shines pure and resplendent for man only around the first sites and scenes of his cradle.

"There is not in that garden a tree, a shrub, or a flower which is not inlaid in my very soul as if it were a part of it! To most of us yet surviving, this piece of

ground seems immense; even in such small space so much does it contain for us of precious things and memories. The frail wooden fence, always rickety and broken, which admitted us there, and over which we would precipitate ourselves with cries of joy; the upraised beds of lettuce, which had been subdivided for us into so many tiny gardens and which we ourselves cultivated; the plane-tree, at the base of which our father used to sit down, with his dogs at his feet, on his return from the chase; the alley, where our gentle mother would take her walks at sunset, often whispering in an undertone the monotonous prayers which fixed her thoughts on God, while with her heart and eyes she drew us all fondly to herself; the grass-plot in the shade on the north side for the warm summer days; the little inner wall protected from the cool winds of autumn, where in mid-day we would range ourselves, with our books in hand, and read in the sunshine; the three lilacs; the two hazel-bushes; the strawberries seen through the leaves of their plants; the plums; the pears; the luscious peaches found in the morning, under the trees, all sticky with their golden gum, and wet with dew; the clump of elms, where each of us, especially myself, would go at noon to read in peace his favorite books, and to reflect upon the various impressions which would arise in us, respectively, from a perusal of those volumes; the recollection of the intimate conversations held here or held there in such and such alleys of the garden; and the particular places where we would say good-by whenever any of us would leave for a long time; the spot where we would meet again on our return; where occurred occasionally some of those intimate and pathetic scenes of the drama of the family; where now and then we saw our father's countenance become darker; where our mother wept on forgiving us our faults, when we would fall on our

knees, hiding our guilty faces in her dress; where they told her of the death of a beloved daughter, our angel-sister; where she would lift up her eyes and hands so reverently and resignedly toward heaven;—all these images, all these ideas, all these emotions, all these groups, all these figures, all these raptures, all these tender caresses, still haunt for us this little inclosure, as they have haunted it, vivified it, and enchanted it during so many days, the shortest and sweetest of days; and, taking into account our since scattered existence, we might in these very alleys wrap ourselves around, so to speak, with this soil, with these trees, and with these plants, which grew up with us, and could wish that the universe itself had begun and ended for us within the walls of this inextensive domain!

"This paternal garden has even yet the same general aspect. The trees, grown somewhat old, are beginning to cover their trunks with specks of moss. The borders of the beds of roses and carnations have encroached upon the sand and narrowed the foot-paths. These borders now trail their longer filaments where the feet become entangled. Two nightingales, perched on or about their nests, still sing during the summer nights. The three pine-trees which, when very young and small, were planted by my mother, still weave and waft through their branches the same melodious breezes. The setting sun shines upon the clouds with undiminished brilliancy. One enjoys the same soothing silence, which is interrupted only in the morning and evening by the ringing of the village bell at prayer-time, or by the monotonous and drowsy cadence of the flails in the hands of the thrashers who beat out the wheat on the barn floors. Parasitic herbs, briers, and large blue-mallows rise in thick bunches among the rose-bushes. The ivy thickens

its leafy and wide-spread draperies against the walls. It grows more and more dense every year about the closed windows of my mother's chamber; and when by chance I find myself walking thereabout, I soon become wrapt in contemplation, and am only enticed away from my enchanting reverie and solitude by the familiar footsteps of an old vine-dresser, who was employed as a gardener in the days of our childhood, and who comes now, from time to time, to visit and nurture his plants, as I do my sad recollections, my regrets, and my phantoms."

Here follow, in verse, some of the lines with which I endeavored to describe this very same place, at a period when my absence from France rendered all its images and objects more aerial by distance:

THE OLD HOMESTEAD AT MILLY.

There is upon the earth a mountain bare,
Which hath on its sides neither thicket nor stream,
And whose humble summit, eroded by time,
Yields gradually to the eye a lower horizon.

Divested of the soil which once top-covered the clay,
Scarcely doth one solitary shrub outthrow its roots;
Overspread is the surface with rocks, almost ready to fall,
Prone to velocity under the light steps of the kid;
From age to age these fragments by their fall have formed
A rough declivity, which, step by step, slowly decreaseth
As one approacheth the rude walls against which they rest.

Here a few niggardly fields have given to our labor
Some stunted vines, whose branches, in vain seeking upright support,
Are wound about on the ground, or entwined on the gravel.
Also several raspberry-bushes, where the children of the hamlets
Pick the forgotten fruit, for which they contend with the birds;
And on the leaves of which a lean ewe doth passively browse,
Bedecking the thorns with her white wool as a tribute.

There are places in which neither the quiet murmuring of waters,
Nor the gentle quivering of the leaves of the forest,

Nor the genial carol of the melodious nightingale,
Doth ever touch the heart, or enchant the ear;
But in which, under the rays of an ever-bright sun,
The lively locust doth deafen with an ear-piercing cry.

There is in this desert a rude and sombre dwelling,
Which the mountain doth shield with its shade,
And whose walls, beaten by the rain and the winds,
Bear their age plainly written on their mosses grown gray.

On the three disjointed stone steps of the threshold
Chance hath well planted the roots of an ivy,
Which increaseth a hundredfold its twisted knots,
And hideth under its long branches the abuses of time;
And its rustic spiral twigs, bending back like an arch,
Make conspicuous the only ornament of the porch.

A garden which doth occupy the slope of the hill
Presenteth to the west a sand-bank unmingled with moisture;
Stones without cement, dyed black with long winters,
Do solemnly bound this contracted inclosure;
The ground which the spade opens every spring
Shows there its bare earth, without stem, without stock;
Neither variegated flower-beds, nor arches of verdure,
Nor the freshness of purling brooks rippling along;
Only seven linden shrubs, forgotten by the mattock,
Give shelter to the grass which grows beneath them.

And there, shedding in autumn a warm and soft shade,
Thrice grateful to the feelings under a cloudless sky,
Are the trees under whose branches, in my happy childhood,
I would sleep, and had many most pleasurable dreams.

Within the rustic inclosure, which thirsts for the dews,
Is a rock-walled well, deep hiding its waters,
Where an old man draws, after many strained efforts,
His bucket brim-full, which he adjusts in its place.

A thrashing-floor where the flails, falling fast on the sheaves,
Harmoniously disengage the grain from the straw;
Where the white pigeon and the dun-colored sparrow
Contend for the wheat-heads uncaught by the rake.

Scattered here on the ground are many wreeks of the farm;
Broken yokes, idle carts, old wagons, standing under the sheds,
The hubs and spokes of weak wheels weighed down in the rut,
And blunt ploughshares worn dull by the furrows.

Nothing relieves the eye from its barren boundary,
Neither the gilded domes of a magnifieent city,
Nor the dusty road, nor far-distant river,
Nor neighboring roofs glittering beneath the morning dew.

Only humble huts, here and there dotting the landseape,
Appear as rude and dispirited habitations of poverty;
These along the foot-paths, in disorder located,
Show forth their smoked walls and thatched roofs.

Here an old man, seated at the door of his dwelling,
Rocks his fretful child in a willow-twig cradle.

In verity, a soil without shade, and with colorless sky,
Mountains without moisture, and valleys without verdure,—
These are the regions, the sites, and the landmarks,
Whose strange images my soul doth forever evoke.

Here always, even at night, my peaceful dreams
Construct scenes and views familiar to mine eyes.
Here every hour of the day, every aspect of the mountains,
Every sound in the twilight coming up from the vale,
Every month which returns as the seer of the seasons,
Advances to flush or to fade the woods and the grass,
The pale moon whieh departs and hides away in the west,
The bright star which aseends above the smoky horizon,
The hungry cattle, repelled by the frosts of great altitudes,
Descending, step by step, from high hill to low valley,
The whistling winds, the budding roses, the green grass and the dry,
The ploughshare in the furrow; the water in the meadow,—
Everything here speaks to me in language of loving accents,
Whose words, understood by the sense and the soul,
Are melodies, perfumes, thunderbolts, tempests,
Roeks, torrents, and images familiarly sweet.

Slumbering deep in my breast were these old reeollections,
All newly aroused by the sight of one object at home,

Where onee again my heart findeth itself in every plaee,
Everything remembers me, everything knows me, everything loves me,
Mine eyes behold friends all along the loved landscape,
Each tree has a history, and each stone a name.

What matters it if this name, unlike Thebes or Palmyra,
Does not recall to one's mind the pomp of a kingdom,
Or human blood shed through the ambition of tyrants,
The scourges of God whom foolish men call great?
This site, where thoughts are again flushed with new life,
These places yet filled with the archives of my soul,
Are to me far greater than the fields of destiny,
Wherein did rise, wherein did fall, some tottering empire.

What is good, what is evil, the soul only can measure;
Quick beats the heart over the ruins of an humble hovel,
But under the imposing monuments of heroes and of gods
The heedless shepherd passes by, whistling, turning from them his eyes.

There is the rustie beneh where often my father would sit,
The hall where his manly and eommanding voiee resounded,
When the laborers, seated on their overturned ploughshares,
Recounted to him how many furrows were made every hour;
Or else, still palpitating with the scenes of his glory,
He would tell us the history of kings and the scaffold,
And, flushed with the great battles in which he had fought,
On narrating his life, he inculcated truth, justice, and virtue.

There is the vacant place where my mother, at all hours,
At the slightest petition would come out of the house,
Bringing on her blest arms the bread and the raiment
Wherewith she would feed the hungry and clothe the poor.

There are the thatched roofs, where, with ever kind hands,
She poured into the wounds of the tenants either oil or honey,
Where, opening by the bedside of expiring old people
The Book wherein hope is vouchsafed to the dying,
And from their languishing lips gently receiving their sighs,
She would teaeh them to turn their last thoughts toward God.
And, holding by the hands the two youngest of us,
To the poor mendicant widow, fallen down on her knees,
Would say to her, wiping the tears from her eyes,
"I give you a little silver, give them baek your prayers!"

There is a seat in the shade, where her foot would rock us,
The branch of the fig-tree that her hand would bend down.

Here is the narrow path which, when the matin bell
In the distant temple pealed forth its loud tones,
Led us straight onward to the altar of Jehovah,
To offer there two incenses pure, Innocence and Happiness.

Here it was that the voice of our pious mother
Explained to us a God, whom we felt in herself!

Here also she showed us the grain hid away in its germ;
The grape naturally distilling its delightful beverage;
The cow into pure milk changing the juices of plants;
The rocks partly opened for the outgushing of waters;
The wool of the sheep, caught and plucked by the briers,
Serving to line and adorn the cosy nests of the birds.

Further she showed us the sun, so true to its zodiac points,
Giving to the zones their climates, their seasons, their hours;
And the glittering stars of night, which God alone can count;
Worlds toward which the thought hardly dares to take flight.

Through love and gratitude she taught us to exercise faith,
And even in our simplest childhood led us to know
How the orb and the insect, though to our eyes invisible,
Have yet, as we, a great Father in heaven.

These heaths, these fields, these vineyards, and these meadows,
Have all their sweet recollections, including their shades;
There played my sisters; and the wind, as they frolicked,
Would follow them, sporting with their light golden hair.

There, guiding the shepherds to the tops of the hills,
I would kindle the bonfires of dry wood and of thorns;
While, my eyes gazing intently at the glare of the flame,
I passed hour after hour in admiring the tremulous blaze.

There, yielding to the fury of the swift and powerful wind,
Before us the hollow old willow prostrated its trunk;
Whilst I hearkened to the whistling among its dead leaves,
And to the blasts whose sounds my soul doth still retain.

There is the maple-tree, which, overhanging the abyss,
In the season of nests, would swing the birds on its top;
Also the ponds in the meadows, whose sleeping waters
Floated our frail boats, which were made of reeds.

The oak-tree, the rock, the mill near the mountain,
And the wall of inclosure, where, during the summer,
I would sit on the stones by the side of the old men,
Watching the waning day with my lingering looks.

There everything is standing yet; everything springs up in its place;
Still can we see in the sand the signs of our footsteps;
Nothing is wanting in these haunts but a heart to enjoy them;
Yet, alas, it is late, and swift time is now speeding away!

Far from the paternal home, like leaves on the ground,
Life hath scattered the children away from their mother;
And this dear hearth resembles now the old nests
From which the swallows have been absent all the long winter.

Already the grass, which grows about the old flagstones,
Fringes fairly the rough edges and effaces the footprints;
And the down-running ivy, infolded like a cloak of mourning,
Covers the window in part and encroaches on the threshold.

Soon, perhaps, . . . O my God, dispel this sad foreboding!
Soon, perhaps, a stranger, quite unknown in the village,
With gold in his pockets, will possess himself of these places,
Which the shades of our ancestors occupy for us;
And from which our recollections of cradles and tombs
Will vanish at his voice, like a nest of young doves,
Which know not how to find rest, when their tree
In the forest hath been cut down by the axe!

I must here ask the pardon of my sisters and nephews and nieces for having taken pleasure in copying over again the foregoing verses in this journal; but they will not sound harshly to them, for they are likewise fruit of the same sap. Let us now open again my mother's manuscript.

XXIV.

"June 16, 1801.

"Yesterday I was so greatly fatigued, after an excursion to Saint Point, made half the way on foot and half the way on the back of a donkey,—for the roads were otherwise impassable,—that I did not feel able to write down any fact or incident connected with our trip, which was, however, very pleasant. We walked about a great deal, enjoying ourselves; and in the evening I took my daughters to church, where I prayed God to bless us. I returned many devout thanks to Him for having given us this estate, upon which my husband did not count. Yet the building itself is very much dilapidated; all the walls are bare, and the coat of arms and the fire-places, which were broken with iron bars by the ruffians of 1789, are still unmended. There is nothing about it in the least calculated to flatter one's vanity. So much the better, though, for I have too much already. Everything smiles upon me,—the country in all its greenness and greatness, our relatives, our friends, our neighbors, and the poorer peasants of the vicinage, who are always at my door, as if I were Providence itself! In general I am but too happy; sometimes it alarms me, for, as a rule, whenever any situation or condition in life is so very enjoyable and satisfactory as the present, it does not last long in this low world. I must, indeed, begin to fortify myself against the danger of an excess of pride and pleasure, and not permit myself to be overjoyed save only through a feeling of gratitude toward the Divine Dispensator for those dreary days of adversity which subjected me to so much wholesome dilemma and discipline."

XXV.

"June 17, 1801.

"My sister-in-law, Mademoiselle de Lamartine, whom I love very much, gave us an excellent dinner to-day at the mansion of Monceau, which she owns undividedly with my husband's eldest brother, Monsieur de Lamartine, the head of the family. Neither the one nor the other would ever consent to marry. Yet certain attachments of the heart were the cause of this resolution on their part. Monsieur de Lamartine, destined by the law of primogeniture to possess alone the immense fortune of the family, loved Mademoiselle de Saint Huruge, who, however, was not thought rich enough for him. He preferred remaining a bachelor all his days rather than marry one whom he did not love. Mademoiselle de Saint Huruge is too old now ever to think of marrying at all in this world. She is the sister of the famous Saint Huruge, so celebrated as one of the leading demagogues of the self-styled tribune during the political disturbances at Paris in the months of June and October. He is, like Mirabeau, a nobleman who has given himself wholly and frantically to the cause of the Revolution. He is not a bad man; so far from it, he is even generous, affable, and obliging. He calls himself a royalist; but in relation to the affairs of government he is often beside himself, and as if in a delirium. I think it was his notorious reputation, and the inauspicious glitter of his name, that prevented my brother-in-law from marrying Mademoiselle de Saint Huruge. She herself is good, sweet, pious, interesting. One can see all over her features the traces of an attractive beauty, veiled with thoughtful sadness. My brother-in-law and she see each other every evening at Mâcon in the family drawing-room, and seem yet to have for each other the

purest and most unalterable friendship. Monsieur de Lamartine is a man of the greatest merit; very well informed, even learned, they say, in the natural sciences; writes with talent and effect, is greatly esteemed, and is very much consulted by all the political parties of the country. In a word, and in fact, he is the most eminent man in the province. His bad health alone prevented him from accepting the nomination as a representative of the nobility in the General Assembly. Later he would have been nominated to the National Convention by the conservative Republicans, if he had not persistently kept himself back by foreseeing the great excesses into which the Convention would be thrown by the demagogues.

"After suffering several months in prison for having merely avowed his sentiments as a Conservative, Monsieur de Lamartine has again come into the possession of his property, and lives in the castle of Monceau, in summer, with his sister. This devoted and affectionate sister has entirely consecrated herself to God and to her brother. She was created to make a husband happy. She was as graceful as she was sweet; this any one may still perceive by her face, which is all goodness. It is said in the family that, before the Revolution, she had a requited attachment for Monsieur de Marigny, a very fascinating gentleman, who was a distinguished poet and musician, a neighbor, and a sort of third-cousin relative.

Monsieur de Marigny emigrated to Italy in 1791; his estates were confiscated; he came back only to die in a hospital, at Mâcon, in 1799. After his death, Mademoiselle de Lamartine would never listen in the least to any proposition of marriage. Her countenance is always clouded by a shade of sweet and impressive melancholy. It is believed that she has secretly made religious vows, although she remains in the world unconnected with any

holy sisterhood. She has added her own fortune, which is considerable, to that of her brother, and spends most of it in works of benevolence and charity. The management of her house, combined with meditation and prayer, and acts of goodness toward the unfortunate, occupy her whole time. In verity, she is a saint, but yet a saint without pretension, and without austerity, whom only to see, or to be near by, is in itself a blessing. She seems to love me sincerely, and I never fail to be edified by what she says and does whenever we pass a day together."

XXVI.

"June 19, 1801.

"To-day I have reflected still more seriously on the danger of frivolous reading. I incline to the opinion that I would do well to deprive myself entirely of such questionable literature; for, since it is generally regarded as one of the pleasures of the world, it would be a sacrifice, or self-denial, which could hardly be otherwise than acceptable to our heavenly Father. Besides, when I am diverted by one of these light yet captivating volumes, those that are more meritorious and useful make me weary; and yet I am aware that I need to peruse more serious and profound books, in order to become better qualified to instruct my children properly. For their sake, then, I have at last decided to deny myself the pleasure, if pleasure it be, of mere trivial reading.

"Yesterday I received a letter from my mother, who is now in Germany. She does not mention the particular place where she is sojourning. I think she is still with the Princess of Orleans, and that she is engaged in the delicate business of arranging a marriage for this noble young lady. May God protect my mother in her pilgrimage, and bless her in her misfortunes!" . . .

In order to become well acquainted with this passage of the journal, one must be aware, and must not forget, that Madame de Roy, my mother's mother, was under-governess of the children of the Duke of Orleans, before the time when Madame de Genlis was appointed upper-governess of these same children. After the execution of the Duke of Orleans, and the dispersion of his family beyond the confines of France, Madame de Roy, my grandmother (the rival of Madame de Genlis), was still devoted by the most tender attachments to the Duchess of Orleans, daughter of the Duke of Penthièvre, and had been summoned from France to Spain, where this noble lady, widow of Philippe the Elder, had taken refuge, with the sanction of the Convention. Madame de Genlis, being suspected and disliked by the Duchess of Orleans, had been removed; and Madame de Roy was commissioned to go abroad for the Princess of Orleans, her old pupil, who was then in a convent of Switzerland or Germany, where she had sought and found safety and rest, but whence it was thought best that she should be induced to return to her mother, in Spain. It was this princess, very young then, and very distinguished for the exalted characteristics of her heart and mind, who afterward became so well known as Madame Adelaide, and who exerted, it is said, great political influence under the reign of her brother, Louis Philippe. My mother was under the impression that it was a question or matter of marriage for this princess; but the chief object of the journey of Madame de Roy was to wean away the noble young lady from the influence of Madame de Genlis, and from participating in the political proceedings of what they then called the party of Orleans, and, withal, to coax her back to Spain. The Duchess of Orleans, widow of Philippe the Elder, had for a long time past been

alienated from the public policy of her husband. She had never taken part in the secret and revolutionary schemes of the party of Orleans in Paris, nor in the ambitious and dynastic plots of this same party in the army of Dumouriez, where Madame de Genlis had taken her pupil. In the palaces of intrigue, the duchess was beauty, candor, and virtue itself. The court of Spain honored in her the double victim of the inexcusable misconduct of her husband and of the terrible proscriptions of the Revolution.

XXVII.

"July 3, 1801.

"Yesterday we took up our residence here,—at Saint Point. I had a great deal of trouble throughout the whole day in establishing all my little world within it. Before sundown I was very tired. In the evening I went to say my prayers in the church, which adjoins the garden. On crossing the cemetery, I noticed two men digging a grave, which caused me to reflect upon the transitory nothingness of this world, for which most of us manifest such infinite concern. I witnessed the burial. A young girl, daughter of the man who had died, on hearing the first shovelful of earth fall upon her father's coffin, fainted, and fell helplessly on the ground. For a few moments, alternately, I placed to her nostrils a bottle of salts; then I took her to my own home, where I gave her a little wine with a cracker, which soon restored her. But what really comforted her most was that I myself wept with her, and that all my little ones, seeing me weep, wept also. Thus this poor dead man was, for his daughter's sake, sincerely mourned by hearts that then did not even know his name. The accounts which the girl gave us of her father's poverty and sickness and sufferings were absolutely sorrowful and heart-rending. Her mother was

also dead, having died less than one year previously; and thus, under the inscrutable ways of Providence, this family of poor little children was completely orphaned. In this last terrible affliction may Heaven help them!

"Nothing affects the poorer classes of the people so much as to see their great griefs understood and shared by sympathizing persons whom they regard as the inheritors of a different nature from their own. At nightfall we took the poor girl back to her hut, at the edge of the grove, where her little brothers were waiting for her at the door, and piteously asked her if their father was not coming home. The circumstances of this solemn episode afforded to my own little girls the opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of some of the dreadful realities which follow the inevitable separations caused by death, and which they themselves, not to speak of others, must some day endure. We should not disguise to our children the contingencies of life. On the contrary, we must let them see it just such as God has been pleased to make it for us, with all its sweetness and with all its bitterness. To learn to suffer is to learn to live."

XXVIII.

"July 5, 1801.

"I have been to the top of the house to-day, to see there an aged spinster, whose years have already run above eighty, and to whom has been left a small pension and a room to live in during her life. She has as an only companion a hen, which is as much attached to her as if it were the tamest bird. The name of this ancient maiden is Mademoiselle Félicite. Underneath her wrinkles and her hair, now as white as the wool in her distaff, one can see that when young she must have been very beautiful. I have the consent of my husband that we will not remove

her away, notwithstanding the querulous troubles she may give us. We should not transplant old trees. A room at her age is a whole world. The places which we inhabit for a long time become, in reality, a part of ourselves.

"Mademoiselle Félicite is visited by the wife of the church-warden, whose name is Jeanette, who was formerly employed in the house, and who is well acquainted with all its history, traditions, and idle tales. One always likes to know what thoughts and purposes occupied the minds of those who previously lived in the same house. Such knowledge often causes us to make our own reflections amid the routine and prosiness of daily life. Some day, for aught I know, future occupants of this house may speak even of me as having once lived within its walls; and Heaven only knows how soon that day may come! My God, where shall I then inhabit? Oh, let it be in Thy great mansion of heavenly rest!

"After dinner, which is always regularly served at one o'clock, I did a little needle-work, and afterward read to my servants a chapter of the 'Meditations on the Gospels.' In the course of a few hours I shall go to finish the day at the church, whose solemnity and darkness inspire me with more piety and devotion. It is thus that I fill the void left by the absence of my husband. After tea, my children and myself will go to take a walk in the fresh air, at the extremity of the large grove. This is a very pleasant condition of life, being almost entirely exempt from either physical or mental sufferings. O my God, I do not deserve to be so happy! Yet I thank Thee, ten thousand times over! Permit not that the inconsiderateness and short-sightedness of my soul should prevent me from tasting the many rich blessings which Thou deignest to shower upon me!

"In my childhood I foolishly imagined that no one could live respectably or contentedly anywhere except at court, in a palace, like the Royal Palace, or like the Palace of Saint Cloud, where I myself then lived with my mother. Now, O my God, through Thy great grace, I am always happy in whatsoever place Thou art pleased to put me!

"When I compare this dilapidated but spacious and healthy house, so well exposed, at different hours of the day, to both the sun and the shade, in a valley as pastoral and picturesque as the one in Switzerland where I spent a part of the first year of my married life; when I compare it also with those narrow and smoky houses of the cities; with those neighboring cottages out of repair and surrounded with weeds and briers; and when I think of so many other women more industrious, more resigned, and more meritorious than myself, who have neither house nor cottage for themselves, nor for their poor little children, am I not, O gracious God, already too much favored by Thy kindness?"

XXIX.

"July 9, 1801.

"To-day I am in such a strange state of sadness and despondency that I can only attribute it to the absence of my husband; for my condition has not changed in the least. But even a change of wind is sometimes enough to interfere with our happiness in this miserable world; a world whose inhabitants, of every kind, are at all times so impressionable. To-day everything bears to me a gloomy aspect. I was so much pleased here only yesterday; but now I feel as if I cannot remain longer than the beginning of the bad season.

"I have just been reading the work of Madame de Genlis on Education, and am much better pleased with it than I thought I should be. I have found in it a great

number of excellent rules and suggestions, of which I desire to avail myself in behalf of my children. This convinces me that we should never allow ourselves to be controlled by mere prejudices. I have frequently and foolishly spoken in a disparaging manner of both the book and its author, relying too implicitly on another's judgment, without myself knowing much of either the one or the other. In that I did very wrong; and I now sincerely repent of it."

XXX.

"July 10, 1801.

"Yesterday I was told of a poor woman in the village who was so destitute that she did not have even a loaf of bread, and who had several small children who could look to her alone for food, clothing, and shelter. I went immediately to see her; but there were already three or four kindly-natured persons with her. The sight of these other sympathizers intimidated me; and, through a true or false modesty of not wishing to show ostentation in charity, I did not then dare to give her anything whatever. I thought I would very soon afterward send her something from the house. When I got home, I saw that it was too late to send a servant so far at night. In short, the poor woman's other good-intentioned visitors were no better than myself; and the consequence was that she and her hungry and half-clad children had to pass the whole night without food. I have severely and justly reproached myself on that score. Very early this morning I myself went again to the humble abode of want, taking with me, to its wretched occupants, all that I could well spare; but, alas, it was not the same thing! It was not timely. It did not come with so good a grace. It failed to give the full measure of relief that would have been felt and acknowledged last evening. Oh, why is it, indeed, that

we are sometimes ashamed to do good, as if, instead, we were doing wrong? It is a weakness into which I now form the resolution never to permit myself to fall again. To this resolution may Heaven help me adhere with inflexible fidelity!"

XXXI.

July 14, 1801.

"This day is passing by very peacefully and pleasantly with me; and I hope it may be passing in the same way with all those in whom I am so much interested, wherever they may be. I have been thinking a great deal about my husband, who is probably with Alphonse to-day at Lyons. I suppose he may have taken him temporarily out of college, for a little vacation and diversion. Ah, how I too should like to be there with them! I implore Heaven to bless them both! This morning I received from my mother a letter which made me feel very happy. She is still in Germany. May God surround her with His protection!

"This morning I read, in the new work of Madame de Genlis, a description of the life of the monks of La Trappe, which has impressed me very deeply. What struck me as remarkable was that they do not think themselves unhappy in this world of deprivations and depravity, and that when death approaches them they accept it with joy. All of which convinces me that it is not so much the material pleasures of the world that make us happy, as the clearness of our consciences and the proper performance of our duties, however unpleasant or even painful those duties may be.

"We are always satisfied at the close of the day when we have employed it usefully and successfully according to our condition and our strength. We then feel as if we are living in serene consonance with God's will. If

we were only well convinced of the truth that every one who cheerfully resigns himself to whatever position in life it has pleased Providence to place him, thereby unites himself to the Divine will, we would always feel happy, and would permit ourselves to be gently controlled by circumstances, and by those who have the right to exercise authority over us. Since I have myself acted on these views, I am infinitely more happy than I ever was prior to the time I entertained them; for (let me confess with shame) there was a time when I wished that everything should be given up to me, and when I was absolutely ambitious to subordinate every other person's will to my own. During that period I was incessantly tormented, alike with the things of to-day and with the affairs of to-morrow. A clearer insight into the economy of the world, under Divine guidance, has since frequently constrained me to admit that, if my peevish and perverse will had been done, it would have resulted only in my own great grief and life-long misery. But now, humbly yielding myself in all things to the infinite and sovereign wisdom, I feel at perfect peace both inwardly and outwardly. May God be praised eternally! He alone is wise and good! He alone is worthy of all homage forever and forever!"

XXXII.

"July 19, 1801.

"My husband has arrived, and I am happy. We took a long walk together to the top of the very highest of the mountains which separate our deep vale from the great valley of the Saône. These summits, which bend down and rise up again by turns, as if they were but vast masses of dough-like earth under the heavy hand of God, are covered with pine- and beech-trees, and in some places with weeds, whose yellow flowers look as if they had been

intended for a sort of gilt frame for the landscape. Elsewhere are visible purple heaths and gray grass-plots, upon which one may see from below the flocks of white sheep, so tame and yet so timid, and which, as seen separately, do not look larger than if they were so many hens. Sparkling here and there is the foam of the little waterfall brooklets, whose beds are discernible from the summit to the base of the mountain through rows of beech- and chestnut-trees, and clumps of willows which are greener and more bushy. How the sight and study of all these things ought to inspire us with a full consciousness of the greatness and goodness of our Creator! How, in truth, the unmarred soul is a mirror which reflects vividly and forcibly all the beautiful works of God; and especially so when we are careful not to permit any interposition between nature and this mirror of the shadows and the clouds and the passions of this life!

"Arriving at the top of the mountain, we saw before us Mont Blanc and the whole chain of the great Alps, covered with eternal snow. My husband and his guide were on foot, but the children and myself were upon donkeys led by little boys. The old vine-dresser, our rustic friend of many years, who owns the donkeys and who knows the foot-paths perfectly, guided the whole party. We were more than three hours in our ascent to the highest ridge, although on looking at it from my window I had supposed that I might easily attain it in half an hour. But distance in the mountains is much like time in life: it deceives. Yet time deceives in a contrary direction; we think the mountains low, and they are high; we think time long, and it is short; it seems endless, even when it has almost passed away forever.

"We passed the whole day with the children, either walking or seated upon the grass, contemplating the won-

derful view which one always has from these towering heights. There, in the lower distance, could be seen the light-hearted native of Mâcon rambling over his white hills, whence came up to us at noon the faint sound of bells. There also was the running brook Bresse, with its almost endless meadows, like that flat and depressed Holland of which my eldest brother, who lived there as secretary of the French Embassy, used to send us marvelous views and pictures when we were children. Finally, and most conspicuous of all, there too was Mont Blanc, which appears by turns—according to the hour and the sun—white, rose-colored, and purple, like the end of a bar of iron, which quickly and strangely whitens and reddens and otherwise colors and discolors itself in the glaring fire of the blacksmith.

"We all dined together, gentlefolk and peasantry, upon the grass. After dinner we mounted our donkeys again, and returned by another pathway, which runs through forests of wild chestnut-trees around the summit of the mountain.

"The hoofs of the donkeys upon the resounding rocks, the laughter and outcries of the children, the brusk whistlings of the ousels as they flew away, the loud reports of the guns of both my husband and the guide, who frequently fired upon the flocks of red partridges, and the animated and incessant conversation of the vine-dresser with the little boys, made a most unusual noise in front of our caravan. A timid person might have supposed that it was a band of marauders going over the mountain. It was certainly enough to frighten the little shepherds who keep their goats and sheep on the borders of the stunted forests through which we were passing. That, indeed, is exactly what happened; for we noticed very soon in a bare glade above our pathway several

droves of shepherdless sheep and goats under the safe-keeping of two shaggy dogs, which barked at us with such trembling and subdued courage as came perceptibly from the retreat of their masters. A little further on we saw the embers of a small fire between two large rocks in the middle of the road. The fire itself was out, but by the side of the ashes there were two pairs of little wooden shoes like those worn by the more indigent children of the country. We supposed that the wearers, who were the keepers of the sheep, were not far off; and I dare say our suppositions were quite correct, and that, frightened by the commingled and uncommon noise of the many voices and gun-shots in the forest, they suddenly ran away and hid themselves in the heath, not having taken time to put the shoes on their naked little feet. The idea occurred to me to give them an agreeable surprise, which enlivened and pleased my little girls extremely. Making a brief halt near the cinders of the extinguished fire, my husband put a silver piece of the value of twelve cents in each of the four little wooden shoes, my daughters adding to each a handful of sugar-plums, which they had taken with them as a part of their lunch. Then we went on our way, talking of the probable surprise and joy of the little fugitives when, after our departure, and seeing and fearing nothing more, they would become sufficiently reassured to return to their post and again take up their shoes. They would undoubtedly think that certain fabulous creatures called fairies, who are superstitiously believed to reside in the grottoes and recesses of this part of the mountain (which they call The Fairy), had made them this welcome little present on passing to or from their abode. The descent through the narrow and sonorous ravines re-echoed with the peals of laughter of our children, who indulged in much jest of

the fear of the little shepherds, of their astonishment, of their pleasure on finding something valuable, and of what they would be likely to tell their mother that night.

"The very thing which we had foreseen as likely to occur took place. The juvenile shepherds, finding their shoes full of sugar-plums and twelve-cent pieces, were deceived into believing in the friendly intervention of the so-called fairies. But their father and their mother, being intelligent people, were not at all deceived; on the contrary, with a delicacy of proceeding which is often found among the peasantry of France, they returned surprise for surprise, in order to show us that they were fully alive to our waggish kindness.

"The next morning the servant on unfastening the door of the house, which opens into a yard without inclosure, found outside upon the threshold four little wicker baskets filled with hazel-nuts, cheese-cakes made of goat's milk, and artistic lumps of first-rate fresh butter in the exact shape of little wooden shoes. Having laid the present on the upper door-step, the children, or those representing them, made their escape without discovery, thus returning enigma for enigma, mystery for mystery, offering for offering.

"The delicacy of this anonymous little present has delighted us very much. It may be that we shall never be able to learn with certainty which cottage gave shelter to those children, nor the name of any one of the persons from whom come those timid but unmistakable thanks, as an acknowledgment which fears to mistake its object, but would rather be deceived than fail to tender a return."

XXXIII.

"July 22, 1801.

"Here we are once again at Milly, our more permanent place of residence. I am very sorry indeed to be so far away from any church; but I shall endeavor to pray as often, and with as much fervor, in my private chamber and in the secluded alley of my garden as in that sacred edifice."

Here follow exclusively domestic details until the 30th day of the month last above written. The journal is taken up again, in the somewhat regular (and yet irregular) order of a diary, on the 30th of July, 1801.

"We left Milly yesterday at ten o'clock to go to Changrenon, to spend the day there with Monsieur and Madame de Rambuteau, our much-esteemed neighbors. Monsieur de Rambuteau, their son, is a very handsome young man, who unconsciously displays in his countenance frankness, elevation of mind, and nobleness of soul. It is said that he gives fair promise of becoming a great and distinguished man. Mademoiselle de Rambuteau (who was afterwards celebrated for her beauty at the court of Bonaparte under the name of Madame de Mesgrigny) is simply bewitching. I sincerely hope that my own dear daughters may have such sweet and charming manners when they shall arrive at her age. She played on the piano for us with a most precocious and brilliant talent. Her teacher performs perfectly on the bass-viol. His name is Breval. He always spends the summer in Changrenon and returns to Paris in the winter. The parents of Mademoiselle Rambuteau spare nothing in the education of their daughter. But she does full honor to their worthy aims and sacrifices; only they require her to study too assiduously, and consequently her physique has become rather pale and weak.

"On my return home I found a letter from my sister (Madame de Vaux), which gives me good news of my Alphonse; it is gratifying in every respect. She also informs me that one of the most thrifty tenants on her property at Vaux, who had bought from her a farm during the Revolution, and had subsequently paid for it in the depreciated paper money of the French Republic, has himself voluntarily acknowledged that his payment in the premises was inadequate; and he has, therefore, of his own volition, taxed himself in her interest twenty thousand francs more, and also to a certain specified allowance of wine every year, during a period of thirty years! This is a very rare instance of conscientious honesty, and one of which we cherish a most pleasing and almost sacred recollection."

XXXIV.

"July 31, 1801.

"To-day has been a very unlucky day in its antagonisms to our little competency. We have had several severe storms, and the wind and hail have badly damaged our vineyards. And what makes the misfortune the more difficult for us to endure is, that our vines were all heavily loaded with grapes. Indeed, I have been very sad to-night, not only on our own account, but also on account of our weather-beaten and dejected vine-dressers, whose respective portions of wine corresponding with ours will be very small this year. Here, though, is another proof of how involuntarily and persistently I am attached to the things of this world! It seems to me, in the narrowness of my view, that happiness is absolutely my due; and hence it is that the smallest possible grief immediately casts me down. My God, forgive me, and cause me soon to see and understand the comparative nothingness of even the best things of this life, in order that I may the

more properly appreciate and strive to obtain the eternal blessings which Thou hast in store for those who do Thy will!"

XXXV.

"August 10, 1801.

"I am again with child, and I only speak the truth when I say that I am already filled with regrets and grief about it. For the same reason, whether right or wrong, my husband is also affected with sighs and sorrow. How, indeed, can we bring up a still larger family on such limited resources? But, not unmindful of what duty may require of me, I am trying to resign myself. May Heaven guide and direct me, and restrain me from evil thoughts and ways! No mortal can foresee the future of his own existence, nor tell what may happen to others. The opinions of the optimists may yet prove to be correct. All that is may be for the best. Perhaps this very child, now beginning to pulsate in my womb, may yet grow to be the crowning joy and satisfaction of my motherhood."

This child was a daughter, my sister, whom my parents named Sophie, and who, having grown up to be a comely and accomplished young lady, was married to the Count of Ligonne, a nobleman of Lozère. In time she herself also came to be the mother of a numerous family, every member of which was more or less gifted with graces and virtues. The father, the mother, the children, all live at Mende, in the esteem and affection of the surrounding country.

Here are several dates all consecrated exclusively to domestic circumstances, with a great many medical notes pertaining to the condition of the sick peasants, whose health she had learned to promote by studying attentively the works of Doctor Tissot. Now for other little facts, which in themselves would be quite insignificant in a city,

but which become memorable events in the country; as, for instance, the following:

"August 26, 1801.

"A peddler made his appearance among us yesterday. Peddlers here are the precursors of autumn. Their presence soon fills up the gap occasioned by the absence of the swallows. It was quite an event for the children. Relieved from the importunities of this strolling petty merchant, we went to the cottage of a distant peasant-neighbor, to dress the scalds of a little boy, whose mother had let him fall into a pot of hot water while she was making lye. I hope to save the little sufferer."

XXXVI.

"September 2, 1801.

"'May the will of God be done!' This was the last phrase with which I closed my journal at its last date; and it is, fitly, I think, the first with which I begin my jottings to-day. We were yesterday frightfully and irreparably used by a great hail-storm, which completely destroyed what remained of our crop of grapes. But for this and the preceding storm we would have had a most bountiful year. Now we ourselves will scarcely have enough to subsist on, nor half enough for the poor families of the husbandmen! I feel sick. I am overburdened with grief and anxiety. This new misfortune will at once subject us to many self-denials and deprivations. All our projects of spending the winters at Mâcon for the education of our daughters are now overthrown; and, besides, we will probably have to sell our horse and our pleasure-wagon. But it is God's will; it is His own doing; and this thought ought to be sufficient to console me in everything. The less pleasure I may have in this world, the less will I become attached to it; the more, in fact, will

I think on the only important and imperishable world, the eternal world above. Nothing deceives and hardens one so much as prosperity; and that which seems to be almost unendurable in nature is, perhaps, a great grace of God, having a tendency to lead us eventually to a fountain of real and everlasting blessings, by depriving us now of those coveted things which are but as dust. I am in better mood to-day to entertain these reflections. Yesterday the blow was too overpowering. My husband, however, had a great deal of courage, much more than I could command; although he seemed to suffer, and did suffer intensely at the time. He said to me, with manly voice and feeling, 'So that neither you nor our children are taken from me, I accept all else; my greatest blessings are in your hearts.' Then he prayed with me in earnest accents, which mingled impressively with the rattling of the large and fast-falling hail-stones, which violently broke the branches of the trees and the window-panes. This tempestuous and appalling scene was not complete without the piteous sobs and lamentations of our afflicted peasants, who were absolutely in despair, in the yard.

"This evening I read a most entertaining description of a journey to the Pyrenees, by Monsieur Dusaux. I was particularly interested in it because it was written in 1788, the very year in which I was to have gone there myself with my mother. We proceeded, however, only so far as Limoges; and there, to my great regret, we had to stop at the house of one of our relatives, the Count de Roy, who has an estate six leagues from Limoges. The inclement season having overtaken us quite unexpectedly, we passed the whole winter there. It was our intention to go to Baréges in the spring; but the Duchess of Orleans recalled my mother to Paris, on account of the Revolution which was just then breaking out, and which caused her

to feel profoundly the necessity of good counsel and assistance. I was very sorry, indeed, not to have had the opportunity of making a trip to the Pyrenees. I love so much, in my imagination, those mountains and the sea, neither of which, however, have I ever seen. Those who are so fortunate as to be born in sight of such grand and beautiful works of God must have truer conceptions of Him than we can form, and also a more immediate and settled conviction of His immeasurable mightiness and His absolute infinity! But no matter now; we shall some time, from on high, see and know more about all these things, and many other wonders besides. When I gaze upward into the vast firmament, during the clear and cheerful nights of spring and summer, wearying myself in counting as many worlds as there are stars; and when I reflect that, behind and still behind those millions of worlds, there are still other millions, of which each and every one, as the astronomers tell us, may be larger than the largest planet of the solar system, if indeed not larger than even the sun itself, I console myself at not having seen those little clods of earth and those little pools of water, which they call the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Ocean.

"To-day is the twenty-fourth anniversary of my admission into the church. Twenty-four years! How time flies! and how rapidly life itself ebbs away! Why, then, should I not now earnestly occupy myself with those things which must succeed life on the earth? Existence here is only a dream. My God, let this dream be to me as painful, or as pleasurable, as Thou wilt have it; only vouchsafe to me from it, I beseech Thee, a blissful awakening!"

XXXVII.

"September 11, 1801.

"My estimable brother-in-law and his amiable sister, Mademoiselle de Lamartine, have spent many hours with us to-day. They brought me news of my poor dissipated brother, and also of my son, Alphonse, who has already received two prizes. His teachers are well pleased with him. I confess that I felt a considerable degree of pride when they told me so many complimentary things about my boy. For this little piece of vanity on my part may it please God to pardon me! I myself have contributed nothing to any of the good qualities of Alphonse's soul. Those excellent qualities he has derived in part from his father on earth, but much more largely from his Father in heaven.

"This evening Madame de Lavernette came to see us, on her return from Lyons. She saw there my Alphonse, whose teachers enthusiastically assured her that he is making wonderful progress in all his studies. His father tries to conceal his own glowing satisfaction; but in his heart he is just as proud as I am. Yet we are much concerned with the thought as to whether this season of rejoicing will continue, so long and labyrinthian is the road between the boy and the man! This child writes me, through Madame de Lavernette, that he is now very impatient to come home. I tremble at the apprehension of seeing him come pale, thin, and in bad health. By such apprehensions, I doubt not, mothers often needlessly embitter their own happiness."

XXXVIII.

"September 18, 1801.

"I have just arrived at Mâcon to meet Alphonse. My heart beats warmly and quickly when I think that, in the

course of a few hours more, I am to see again my dear child. . . . He has come at last! He arrived very late. I had gone to pray in the little oratory of the good ladies Focard, a family of uncloistered nuns, who have made a sort of convent of their house. I needed this prayer and meditation at the foot of the altar to calm my increasing agitation. Yet the hoped-for and prayed-for event has happened, and I find my Alphonse in excellent health,—adolescent, strong, and handsome; and it seems to me that he has lost nothing of the simple piety which I have tried so earnestly to impart to him, and on which account I was and am most deeply concerned.

XXXIX.

"September 23, 1801.

"We had all the members of our family together, and also Monsieur de Blondel, a friend of our family, at dinner to-day. At the table we spoke a great deal about Alphonse, he himself being present. We read an extract from one of his disquisitions at school, and also a brief essay which his father had requested him to write at home. We were all very much pleased with his writings, and my pride as his mother was too much flattered."

Here follow several dates filled with private details, relating exclusively to the duties and interests of the household.

XL.

"October 6, 1801.

"Yesterday I wanted to write something in this journal, but a feeling of confusion and languidness prevented me. I had all day a very vivid recollection of what I experienced on that very day twelve years before. With what great rapidity, indeed, does time slip away! It was the sadly memorable 6th of October, which had proved so disastrous to the royal family at Versailles. On that

day I was at Chatou, near Versailles, with my mother. We were returning from Mesuil, and were intending to go directly as far as Paris; but, failing to obtain horses, we were obliged to stop at Chatou, and there we slept at the house of Madame Duperron, who was my mother's personal friend. This delay proved very fortunate for us. Paris was then in a great uproar, and all the carriages and other vehicles found going thitherward were stopped and detained under arrest or turned back. We were also very much alarmed at Chatou, because Monsieur de Lambert, son-in-law of Madame Duperron, was at his post as a member of the military forces at Versailles. His wife and daughters were literally trembling for his life.

"We passed several days at Chatou, and then left there in company with Madame de Montbriand, who was like myself a canoness of the Order of Salles; our purpose under the circumstances being to make our way to Lyons, without again attempting to go to Paris until the political affairs of that capital should become more tranquil.

"It was this journey which helped to bring about my marriage with the Chevalier de Lamartine, whom I have loved, and who has loved me, ever since we first met at a certain informal convocation of the Order of Salles in the house of the Countess of Lamartine de Villars, his sister and my friend. Madame de Montbriand and myself, having been under the necessity of stopping twenty-four hours at Mâcon to have our carriage repaired, saw there all the family of my husband, who paid us a thousand respectful and gratifying attentions. The Chevalier de Lamartine was then absent with his regiment. We passed the whole day in the mansion of his family at Mâcon. It appears that I was fortunate enough to please them all, without a single exception,—his father, his mother, his

brothers, and his sisters. That happy fact at once renewed and increased the prospect of marriage between the Chevalier and myself. Whether we should marry or not had already been contemplated and discussed for a long time; but, from first to last, a thousand obstacles had been thrown in the way of arriving at a final decision of the important question. I experience now much real delight in thinking of the whole of this week in October in all of its details, for it was in reality the origin of my happiness; and I often give unfeigned thanks to God, who conducted me, seemingly by chance and accident, to Mâcon, where He graciously ordained that our thwarted love should at last be blessed, and that, notwithstanding my subjection to many trials and perplexities, I should yet be the creature of so much happiness with my husband and my children!"

XLI.

"October 11, 1801.

"This forenoon brought me a letter from my mother. She is soon to come back from the watering-places of Germany with the Princess of Orleans, whose health is now much better. My mother is constantly with this noble young lady; she says, however, that she is as yet undecided whether she will go to Spain, as she herself has an insuperable dread of the Mediterranean, and the young princess does not desire to go overland through France.

"With the utmost pleasantness and politeness, my good brother-in-law, Monsieur de Lamartine, took me yesterday to the hamlet of Champagne, near the castle of Péronne, which also belongs to the family. Afterward we went to see an elegant house which he has just had constructed in Champagne; he having been actuated, from the very commencement of the building, by the

generous intention of transferring the property as a possession to one of my children. Of them he always speaks to me as a true father of a family. My children have, in all the estates which will come to them after their uncles and aunts shall have passed away, a really fine prospect, according to the world's calculation. But, after all, this mere material prospect is a very little thing. Rather may it please God to make them rich in piety and in honor! Well does Heaven know that that is the only true wealth, the only certain riches, I ask for them.

"Every morning I require Alphonse to read a chapter in a good book by a German priest, in order that he may learn well the religious sentiments which emanate from all nature. I am greatly pleased with his intelligence, but it becomes necessary for me to reprove him very often because of his lack of patience, especially with his sisters. Indeed, I am beginning to fear that his disposition may be too haughty and too imperious, and that he will grow up with these defects conspicuous in his nature, unless he soon learn to discipline himself to the use of gentler words and ways."

XLII.

"November 9, 1801.

"Here I find myself looking back through the nothingness of a great blank; the excess of my occupations, and the ailments of my children, having prevented me from writing for nearly a month. To-day I am again at Lyons, where I have brought back Alphonse to his academy. My heart bleeds at the mere thought of separating from him. This morning I attended the religious services with which they open the exercises of the academy. Yet while there I could do little else than look about, among all those little heads, for his beautiful brown hair. My God, how painful it is thus to uproot this tender plant from the heart

wherein it has been nurtured, and to throw it so abruptly into the mercenary channels of the world! I felt very low-spirited and sick at heart as I came out of the academy. Neither the sight of the picturesque mountains along the Saône; of the islands of Barbe and of Fourvière, overspread as they were by the bright rays of the sun; nor the multifarious noises of the city, heard on descending the plateau of the Red Cross at Lyons, could divert my mind. In my disconsolateness, I was much like Abraham when he turned back to look upon Hagar and her son, abandoned to the dangers of the desert. And yet the desert itself is but little more dangerous than the immoral crowd wherein society compels mothers to abandon their innocent children. I passed the day quietly, almost speechlessly, with my sister, Madame de Vaux, who now lives at Lyons. We consoled each other, silently mixing our tears; for she, too, has had to endure many sorrows and great reverses of fortune.

"I am spending a whole week at my sister's, in Lyons, in order that I may see, a few more times, my poor Alphonse, who cannot readily re-adapt himself to the confinement of his school. My being here in this way also helps me to accustom myself by degrees to this distressing separation.

"The pious and kind-hearted Abbot of Lamartine, who lives on his estate near Dijon, has lent us, for the winter, his little house, formerly set apart for the use of the Ursulines at Mâcon. This house adjoins the great family mansion, which my brother-in-law, Monsieur de Lamartine, and his two sisters now occupy; and while, in one direction, it opens upon an inferior back street, very narrow and very sombre, yet it has the advantage of communicating, inside, with the large building. I am very glad of the opportunity thus afforded me to reside in

the city of Mâcon, for it enables me to employ good teachers for my children."

The date of the 1st of January, 1802, is signalized in the journal by ardent and profuse thanksgivings for the many benefits and blessings received during the year past, and by strong resolutions to profit by the new year, in making more energetic efforts with herself to become more perfect in piety.

XLIII.

"January 7, 1802.

"Bonaparte passed along this road, yesterday, on his way to Lyons, to preside there over the deliberations of the Cisalpines. Much doubt and speculation exist as to the consequences which may result from that meeting.

"I have just written to my mother, who is now at Leghorn, where she will immediately embark for Spain with the Princess of Orleans. May God protect her during her passage, and give her a less painful voyage than she seems to apprehend! She writes me to come and meet her, and tells me many very complimentary and honorable things about the young princess. Monsieur de Pierreclos, who has been relieved from the political disabilities which he incurred, has been to see us. He came direct from Lyons, where he had gone to get some news from Alphonse, who there saw the troops reviewed by Bonaparte, in Bellecour Square. His teachers permitted him to go there, as a reward for his good conduct, with twelve others of their best scholars. I am very much pleased with this little distinction; which I regard as an auspicious sign."

During the whole of the winter of 1802 the journal is diversified only by the impressions, now warm, and now more fervent, of a soul who examines the heart with much

scrupulousness, and who takes special pains to struggle against the weaknesses of our common nature.

XLIV.

On the 17th of April my mother returned to the country, and while there received letters from Spain. She says:

"A few days ago I received a letter from my dear mother, who, at last, informs me of her safe arrival at Barcelona. She experienced a great many unexpected adventures, among others a terrific storm, in her passage from Leghorn to the harbor of Rosas, which lasted three days and two nights. Shortly after they landed at Rosas, their ship suddenly and unaccountably disappeared; and they had not yet been able to obtain any news of it when my mother wrote. I ought to thank God, most humbly and heartily, for the protection He has so graciously granted my mother. The meeting between the Duchess of Orleans and her daughter was very touching. Eleven years had elapsed since they were separated by the Revolution. I do not know when my mother will return to France."

XLV.

"September 5, 1802.

"I have been absent from this journal a long time, and so have made no entries in it. I was delivered of a daughter on the 18th of April. My sister, who kindly came here to attend me in my confinement, overwhelmed me with the gentlest and most constant care and attention. I am myself nursing this child with as much sufficiency and satisfaction as I nursed all my other children.

"We have, for the first time, just established family prayer in our home; and all our servants are kindly invited and requested to participate with us in this religious

exercise. It is a very touching and useful custom, if we wish and expect our home to be, according to the admonition of the gospel, a house of brethren. Nothing ordinarily exalts the spirit of servants so much as this daily communion with their masters through prayer and humility before God, who recognizes no distinction of worldly wealth or worldly poverty. It is also very good for the masters themselves, who are thus reminded of a Christian equality with their more lowly companions. Moreover, it accustoms the children to think devoutly of their heavenly Father, whom they do not see, but to whom we thus address ourselves with reverence and confidence before them."

"September 7, 1802.

"My mother is on her way back from Spain to France."

XLVI.

"October 2, 1802.

"I am now at Saint Point, and have been here ever since yesterday morning, with Alphonse, Cecilia, and Eugenia. This gathering of ourselves together has caused great joy to my children. Alphonse came on mule-back; he was all aglow with ecstasies of delight. We picked the grapes from our longest trellis. There were enough grapes to make two tuns of wine. My husband has just purchased a very pretty estate, adjoining Milly, from Monsieur Aubel. His sister, Madame de Villars, has lent him fifty thousand francs to enable him to acquire this property. If our earthly possessions increase thus rapidly (yet we seem to have but little for so many children), may God grant that we may make a proper use of our success! I brought with me here the 'Confessions of Saint Augustine,' which is a book I like very much; and I observed with peculiar pleasure, this morning, that Alphonse had opened it and was reading it with thoughtful attention."

XLVII.

"October 28, 1802.

"With much gravity and sadness I took my son back to Lyons. My mother, who is now on her little estate at Rieux, near Montmirail, and who, having but recently returned from Spain, finds her affairs in very bad condition, presses me in every letter to visit her for purposes of consultation. I shall go, and shall go alone, without the children, and without servants; to avoid expenses. Would it not be wrong in me to study my own comforts, and to foster my vanities, while my good mother, and so many other unfortunate persons, who are more worthy than I am, have to suffer the cruel embarrassments which result from the loss of their fortunes?

"I have put my little babe out to nurse with a pretty country-girl at Milly, in order to be free to make this long journey. I have enough strength now, and am feeling almost as light as I did at fifteen years of age. Yesterday I went on foot to the little church at Bussière, a village at considerable distance from Milly. The weather was bad and the road was rough; but I felt an unusual degree of elasticity, which is one of the best proofs of good health. That pleasant piece of pedestrianism reminded me of my young days, and especially, among other things, of a walk which I once took with my father and sister, now of Rochemont, from the castle of Saint Cloud to the castle of Meudon, when it really seemed to me that I walked in the air, and touched not the ground but to rebound upward again.

"My poor aunt, who so tenderly and affectionately brought me up in the early days of my childhood, is dead. The news of her death has grieved me very much. I am also distressed about the fate of old Jacqueline, her chambermaid, who was likewise a sort of second mother

to me, and who will now find herself isolated and perhaps in want. I should like to bring her home at any venture or cost; but the family is opposed to it, my husband fearing, and with good reason, that by so doing he might displease and offend his brothers and sisters, on whom we depend so much for the future earthly welfare of our children. He proposes to me to pay unobtrusively and secretly Jacqueline's board in some house at Lyons, where she will be well sheltered from poverty and neglect; but I confess that I should like to fulfill more fully and openly my duties of gratitude toward this poor woman. If I were in her place and she in mine, nothing would prevent her from taking me, even, if in the least necessary, into her own bed."

XLVIII.

"December 17, 1802.

"Alphonse has just run away from the college with two of his school-mates, the young brothers Veydel, whom he led away with himself. They were overtaken six leagues from Lyons. The close confinement of the college has been to him, for some time past, unbearable. I am very much grieved about it. His independent disposition frightens me. I fear I have spoilt him. His teachers met a great deal of resistance in compelling him to write to his father a letter of apology and repentance.

"I often read the 'Confessions of Saint Augustine.' It is a book very proper for me to read at this time. I desire to imitate as nearly as possible his pious mother, Saint Monica; and, following her devout example, pray and pray unceasingly for my children."

XLIX.

"January 14, 1803.

"Yesterday I arrived at Rieux, after a very fatiguing journey and a few days' sojourn at Paris. From Cou-

lommiers to Rieux I was obliged to make the trip in a side-saddle upon a farmer's horse, which a boy led by the bridle. The wind was from the north, and was cold and freezing. Later in the day the weather changed, clouds came, and soon afterward the snow was beating hard in my face. I then suffered as one seldom suffers outside of Siberia.

"It would be difficult for me to describe adequately the great joy I experienced on meeting again my poor mother, who, in embracing me, gave proof that she was equally full of the same emotion toward myself. That moment was one of so much happiness to me that I forgot all my troubles. Here I am once more in my dear little house at Rieux, where I passed happily several summer months in my childhood. Ah, if we could only find again, in connection with the places of our youth, everything that then animated them and imparted to them the life of sweet recollections! My good mother is now very much changed, because of her exilements, her travels, and her various adversities, including the ordinary cares of existence which constantly prey upon her, for herself, for her son, and for her daughters.

"In the evenings my mother tells me a thousand and one interesting things, either in relation to our family or with regard to the voyages and journeys which she has recently taken with the young princess. I always profit by her judgment, her determination, and her good advice in difficult matters, and greatly admire the firmness and uprightness with which she invariably weighs circumstances and characters. Yet it is very hard to be in such an embarrassed and precarious situation as that in which she now finds herself. She has grown very old in appearance; but, notwithstanding her misfortunes, she is always cheerful and sprightly in conversation. How

sincerely I should like to be rich enough, and independent enough, to help her efficiently in the retrievement of her fallen fortunes! But, alas, I can give so little out of what is still left for my own household and for my children! I desire to write down every remarkable fact which she may state to me. She told me yesterday that our family came from the Vivarais, and that an unmarried lady, a Mademoiselle de Roy, still holds, at Montfaucon, the tenure of Rubec, as the heiress of the oldest branch of the house. This peculiar right in the Rubec property, after the death of Mademoiselle de Roy, will descend to my mother. I do most heartily wish for her all that can alleviate and smooth the declining days of her life. Even now, at the beginning of her old age, she is obliged to deprive herself of the services of a waiting-maid. I shall certainly think of her whenever I may be inclined to complain of my lot. My God, may it please Thee to come to her aid, and to lessen and lighten the burden of years and sorrows which now weigh upon her, after a long life so agitated and yet so blameless!

"This evening my mother told me a great many things about Madame de la Reynière, the widow of the principal farmer of the neighborhood, to whom she was related, and with whom she always remained intimately and happily acquainted. Monsieur d'Orsay is our kinsman through this same family; he married a German princess, a relative of the King of Prussia. Monsieur d'Orsay, his son, married an Italian princess, though she was of a less illustrious house. These regular conversations by the fireside recall successively to our minds most of those persons with whom my mother was well acquainted, and many of whom I have often seen with her in my childhood. Alas, how few of them remain after the great

political convulsions which have dispersed so many of the families of France!

"Here I will make mention of a very strange anecdote about J. J. Rousseau and the wife of the Field-Marshal of Luxembourg, with whom my mother was long and intimately acquainted. This same lady, being also a great friend of Rousseau, knew that the unmarried woman with whom he then lived was with child. She was afraid that Rousseau might be intent on throwing this coming child into the foundlings' hospital, where, as was well known, he had already thrown three of his other illegitimate children. So she went to see Monsieur Tronchin, of Geneva, a particular friend of Rousseau, and begged him earnestly to have this child when born brought to her, as she wished to adopt and rear it. Monsieur Tronchin spoke of it to Rousseau, who apparently gave his consent without hesitation. He also had an interview with the mother of the child about it, and she was filled with joy at the idea. As soon as she was confined, the poor woman caused information of the fact to be conveyed to Tronchin. He came; he saw a beautiful child, a boy full of life and promise. He made arrangements with the mother as to the hour at which he was to come and take the child the next morning; but at midnight, Rousseau, wrapped in a sombre-colored cloak, approached the bed of the prostrate and helpless mother, and, in spite of her cries, carried away his own child to an infant asylum, and there left it forever, without any mark of recognition or distinction! And yet this is the man whom so many exalt as the possessor of a breast of refined sensibility! Away with the false panegyric! He is simply a madman, or a monster whose diseased brain has led his heart astray. Alas! genius, when it is not founded on a basis of good sense, is but too often the first paroxysm of delirium.

Tasso and Rousseau are both evidences of the truth of this remark. Let us accept genius for ourselves, if God gives it to us, but let us rather wish and pray for good sense and good morals for our children!

"The weather now is extremely cold; the snow is falling in great flakes. The whole country, as far as the eye can see, is covered with the white mantle of winter. I am now reading, with great interest, Tacitus and other able historians of antiquity, in whose works my mother also has always manifested great delight. I inherited and acquired this literary taste in the society of philosophers and other learned men, who frequently filled my mother's drawing-room in the Royal Palace.

"This morning a priest, who ministers to my mother, the Abbot Chauveau, a man of great merit and piety, held services for us. An infant was baptized, and I was much moved by the ceremony. Christenings, even though they be of little ones whom I have never seen before, always affect me with tender emotion, because they remind me of my own children.

"I went this afternoon to see a poor woman in childbed, quite sick, and deprived of the care and assistance which alleviated my own sufferings when I was in that excruciatingly painful condition. Reflecting seriously upon her destitution and sickness, and remembering all the delicacies and health with which I am myself happily surrounded, I formed the firm resolution not to lay up absolutely and entirely for myself anything actually necessary for others also, who are in penury, whether it be food, or fire-wood, or even money, when I can economize somewhat, and so be able to relieve one or more of the very poor persons who may be within my reach. How much more sensitive we always are to the sufferings which we ourselves have experienced, or which we

have witnessed with our own eyes! Indirect benevolence is very good, but direct charity, from hand to hand and from heart to heart, is much more efficacious. My God, be pleased to strengthen me in them; let there be no frivolity, nor forgetfulness, nor languor, to prevent me from doing my whole duty acceptably in Thy sight!

"This morning I again read Tacitus, who, as a historian, pleases me exceedingly. He touches and edifies me with his bold and graphic narrations, while other historians only instruct me. My father's library here is especially rich in history, and, fortunately, this kind of reading imparts to me a disgust for novels and other trivial books, attention to which is time lost.

"To-day I wrote in my mother's letter a few brief sentences to the Princess of Orleans. My mother wished and requested me to do so. She has given me the portrait of this charming young princess,—the same being the portrait which the Duchess of Orleans herself gave her as a graceful acknowledgment of the journeys and voyages which my mother made to conduct her daughter to her at Rosas.

"Favored with good roads and a beautiful day, my mother and I went yesterday to Montmirail and its environs, to return visits due to old friends of the family. There I saw again a certain maiden lady named Mademoiselle de Champagne. She is a lady of rank, who yet lives very poorly in a little cottage; she herself, with only one servant, cultivates her own garden, drives the cows to the pasture, reaps the harvest, and is quite happy.

"At Montmirail everybody spoke in the highest terms of Monsieur and Madame Larochefoucauld Doudeauville, who have there a beautiful castle. They have just lost their only daughter, and there now remains to them an only son, who is said to be a handsome and promising

young man of about eighteen years of age. Wherever we went, mention was made to us of numberless acts of kindness which they are in the habit of doing to the poorer people of the neighborhood. (Later in life this gentleman was honored with the high title and privileges of Duke of Larochefoucauld.) My poor brother (who is not now so dissipated as he was formerly) arrived to-day. He has made peace with my mother, and all the past is sincerely forgiven. He seems to be very reasonable at present, and his plans and purposes are not without merit. Very soon he will go to England, where my mother will recommend him to those estimable and exemplary scions of French royalty, the young Princes of Orleans. I hope they may in some way be useful to him."

L.

My mother returned to Milly in the spring, and there she again took up her journal, expressing her gratitude to Heaven for the privilege of once more being permitted to rejoin, in life and health, her husband and her children. Soon afterward she went to Lyons, with the object of informing herself of the motives which induced her son to run away from the college. She sympathized strongly with his troubles and his childish dislikes, and at once adopted a resolution to use such influence as would, if possible, result in his being allowed to finish his studies in a more religious and paternal institution.

"I purchased yesterday," says she, "several things at Lyons to make myself a bed. I bought the principal material at two francs a metre. It is not very pretty, but it is good, and is by no means displeasing to the eye. Henceforth, as I have already said, I am determined not to be extravagant. In order that I may be able to do some good to those who are in need of everything, I must

now begin, in good faith, the practice of self-denial. Alas, it seems to me that I never do any good!

"My brother writes to me that he is situated very advantageously in England. But if there should be an outbreak of war, as is apprehended, what will become of him? We talk a great deal about the probable future of public affairs.

"I am now reading a new book, with which I am perfectly enraptured. It is 'The Genius of Christianity,' by Monsieur de Chateaubriand. The style at once dazzles and enchants me, though, in great matters of this kind, it may be that I am not a good judge."

Here intervene three months of ordinary details and of pious self-examinations of her imperfections and of her faults.

LI.

"BELLEY, October 23, 1803.

"At last I have prevailed on my husband and his brothers, after a great deal of argument and persuasion, to take Alphonse from his school at Lyons and to put him in the college kept by the Jesuits at Belley, on the frontier of Savoy. I brought him here myself. Yesterday, on entering him with those austere ecclesiastics, I was too much grieved to write. I passed half the night weeping."

LII.

"October 27, 1803.

"I went this morning to look at my poor child through the grating of the yard of the college. I saw him afterward in the midst of all the scholars, during the religious exercises. He told me that he was much pleased with his reception by both his teachers and his school-mates. During the day I paid a visit to the Abbot Montuzet, the aged prior of the Order of Salles. In the evening I

returned to Mâcon. Passing before the yard of the college, I saw, from the back of the carriage, the boys running and playing, and heard their cries of joy. Fortunately, Alphonse did not come near the railing to see my carriage go by; for if he had done so he would have shed too many tears, and so would I. It is better not to excite constantly the tender sympathies of boys destined to become men. Under my veil I wept alone, in the back of my carriage, most of the day."

LIII.

"October 29, 1803.

"At Mâcon I found very sad news from my mother. The war with England has compelled my brother to quit London, where he had found pleasant and profitable employment. He has again come back as a charge on my poor mother, who is herself so straitened in circumstances, at this time, that she is obliged to sell the greater part of our little estate at Rieux to pay the expenses and debts contracted by her during her travels in Germany and Spain.

"To-day I have news from my sister, and I am happy that it has been in my power to help her out of her pecuniary embarrassments and to send her one thousand crowns, which, through me, the excellent Madame de Villars, my sister-in-law, has lent her, without interest, for three years. Madame de Villars, economizing and refusing herself every luxury, in order that she may be true in fact to her vow of poverty, from which, however, the Revolution and the Pope relieved her by destroying the organization of her sisterhood, lavishes all her fortune, which is considerable, on the poorer members of her family and on her old and impoverished companions in religion. To five or six of these needy persons she

gives annual pensions. The world laughs at her spirit and practice of order and economy, but God rewards her in her heart, and the poor praise her; nor can they ever praise her in excess of her abounding virtues."

LIV.

"March 6, 1804.

"After the application to myself, for some time past, of a system of careful retrenchment, I have just sent ninety dollars to my poor brother.

"To-day is the anniversary of my marriage. It is now fourteen years since I had the happiness to marry a man who seemed to be endowed with the favor of Heaven. I knew him to be very amiable and good, but I was not aware that he was so nearly perfect. Almost his only faults are his scruples of honor and an upright ness of soul that takes umbrage at the least indelicacy · but these, even at the worst, are the least serious of defects. He lives only for me and for his children; and often he has many cares for such a numerous family with so small a fortune. Ah, it is for me to try to lighten his cares, and for Providence to help us both. I intrust myself entirely to God. This faith in my breast—a faith which is absolute—is, perhaps, my only virtue; in almost everything else I am very imperfect."

LV.

"March 16, 1804.

"In the cemetery of Bussière, which is our parish when we are at Milly, a grave-digger found, this morning, the dead body of a woman, perfectly well preserved, who had, it is believed, been buried there many years. No one could be found who knew anything of either her name or her history. Judging from appearances, she was a very young

woman. She had a wedding-ring on her finger, and a rosary in her hand, and seemed only asleep, calmly and peacefully waiting for the eternal awakening. I love to think that she may have been a saint, to whom God was pleased to vouchsafe the extraordinary grace of preservation from the common fate."

LVI.

"March 20, 1804.

"Alas, alas, how greatly I was grieved on Wednesday morning! That morning on going into my sitting-room, where I generally do my sewing, I found upon the mantelpiece a letter from my sister, addressed to my husband. In my curiosity and eagerness I supposed I might properly open the letter, as my husband has always authorized and requested me to do in his absence. What did I see? Great God! the tragic death of my dissolute brother! My poor mother had been trying hard to obtain for him a situation in business. What, indeed, will become of her on hearing the details of this most afflicting misfortune? O my God, may it please Thee to make it known to her Thyself! Have pity on my deceased brother, forgive the errors of his youth, and shelter his soul with the mantle of Thy saving mercies! Since the receipt of this awful news I have done little else than go to church, where I have wept day and night. Yet my sister informs me that our poor brother died resignedly and otherwise like a Christian. I most sincerely hope and pray that he is now in heaven! The higher world is, indeed, the only explanation of the lower.

"I have employed all these days in devotional exercises in connection with our church jubilee. My soul finds rest only in what elevates it nearer to God. Four of my daughters followed me and worshiped with me.

Among others in the church, there were numbers of young girls, who sang canticles, penitents in their ancient costumes, and a great many boys in file, who were disciplined to appear in great meditation. I was much touched and edified by what I saw and heard. I pray that God, tenderly sympathizing with His creatures, may have mercy on us all!

"New afflictions now beset me on account of my poor mother, who is herself harassed with so many troubles, both new and old. It was supposed in Paris that my prodigal brother, now dead, had been implicated in a conspiracy against Bonaparte. He had neither the bent, the will, nor the means for so great a conspiracy. It was simply a similarity of name that caused this mistake,—coupled with the circumstance also of his having but recently come from England. The officers of the law even went so far as to search my sister's house, wherein they made an examination of all his papers. The only writings which they found among his effects were friendly letters and literary essays."

LVII.

"March 21, 1804.

"I spent a considerable part of this morning in reading a new novel by Madame de Genlis, on 'Mademoiselle de la Vallière.' It is a historical romance, very well written, piquant and entertaining, and not without many well-rounded paragraphs of needed morality and instruction. Yet I deem portions of the book rather dangerous for young people. It certainly stirred up in me a train of wholesome reflections on the comparative nothingness of human things, and also on the glaring insufficiency of all the greatness of the earth for the happiness here of an elevated soul, that constantly feels how immeasurably, in

its very self, it is above and beyond everything that surrounds it. Nothing on earth can ever satisfy it. In vain is it unceasingly and restlessly turning and going this way and that way over our mundane sphere. Everything calls it back to God, in whose realm alone it can at last lie at rest and find a happy termination of its numberless agitations and anxieties. Yes, O my God, through Thy grace I feel more and more every day the need of belonging only to Thee, and the duty of sacrificing everything to Thee, so that I may eventually find Thee, and, in finding Thee, find salvation for my soul! Anything less than this, any less desire or aspiration on my part, would be unworthy of me. It is not amiss in me to give myself up to these grand thoughts; for my soul is itself an emanation from God; and it can find perfect peace and joy only by uniting again with the infinite potency of its beginning and its end. Let me, O Lord, lift myself up unceasingly to Thee, and henceforth may nothing ever again separate me from Thy benign presence!

"This morning I sinned against charity, having been somewhat rough with a poor girl who came to ask of me a little favor. I was very sorry for it afterward, and tried to make amends for my fault by being particularly kind to her and doing for her everything in my power. Yesterday I also experienced a degree of pride and haughtiness of spirit. For this old sin, newly committed, may it please God to pardon me! It seems that I really need to pray for forgiveness a hundred times a day; so unholy and wayward even yet is my poor heart."

LVIII.

"March 24, 1804.

"Just now I have noticed that some of my hairs are getting gray. What an unmistakable warning of eternity!

Time hurries on so rapidly! What have I done with my youth? At the very best, my days have been occupied only half the time in diligent and judicious labors for the present and future welfare of myself and those around me."

LIX.

"MILLY, June 17, 1804.

"Three days ago I was made very peaceful and happy, for just then I received from my sister a letter in which she gave me good news from my mother. I was led to suppose that she had almost entirely recovered her health; in fact, she was reported so well that she was already speaking of going to reside at Montmirail. Yesterday, however, my husband received from my sister another letter, which gives me cause for much anxiety. She says that during the last two days my mother's ailments have been greatly aggravated. It appears, indeed, that she is now very ill. This cruel letter came at a moment when Mademoiselle de Monceau and my children were joyfully preparing to present me a large and beautiful bouquet. It grievously embittered the pleasure which their flowery feast would otherwise have given me. I was to have dined at Monceau to-day, but, as I could not go myself, my husband went, taking with him the children."

LX.

"May God have mercy on the soul of my good mother! She is dead! Her great charity, her benevolence, and a thousand other virtues which she practiced assiduously during her life, will, I believe, secure for her unending happiness in heaven. Of late her actual situation was a painful one. Yet the very knowledge of her many troubles and sorrows, now that they are over, brings me consolation, for I feel assured that through such tribulations she

has at last attained her great reward. It was more to grief than to age that she finally succumbed. The thought that I shall never more be able to see her sweet face in this perishable world is heart-rending, and almost terrifies me whenever I dwell upon it.

"My grandmother lived ninety-two years, and I had hoped for the same protracted pilgrimage for my own mother. In her verbal will—for she did not execute one in writing—she has bettered the condition of my sister. My conscience would never be easy if I did not fulfill all my obligations to the provisions of this orally expressed will with as much scrupulousness as if the will had been legally written and recorded. Yet I have heard that there are apprehensions of trouble about it. Fortunately, my husband thinks and intends just as I do.

"This morning I wrote to the Princess of Orleans the sad news of my mother's death, suggesting that she communicate it gently to her own mother, the Duchess. My husband has just made the formal relinquishment which I desired for the sake of my sister, who has now determined to purchase Rieux, where we were so happy in our childhood. I much fear, however, that this filial obedience to our mother's wishes touching her estate may increase the embarrassments of our own little fortune. Interest, though, must not be weighed against duty."

LXI.

"September 14, 1804.

"I am now at Belley, from which place I am to take Alphonse for his vacation. I met him in the yard as I arrived, and he was quite as much moved as I was. Suddenly his surprise and emotion caused him to become so pale that I feared he would faint. A moment afterward, however, we embraced and re-embraced each other with

wild demonstrations of joy. To-morrow he will have to play the part of an orator in the public exercises which the Jesuits always require of their best pupils at the end of the year. The bare thought of the embarrassing trial through which my boy will have to pass worries me almost as much as if it were I myself who had to deliver the oration."

Here ensues a long interruption.

LXII.

" February 5, 1805.

"I have witnessed to-day the taking of the veil by several hospital nuns, at the Infirmary of Mâcon. The priest preached a solemn discourse to them, and told them that they had irrevocably embraced for life a state of penance and self-mortification. A crown of thorns was then placed upon each of their heads. Their devotion excited my admiration; but the thought occurred to me at the same time, that the mother of a family, if she discharge well her duties, may very nearly approximate the degree of perfection of the unwedded sister of charity. As a general rule, we do not think profoundly enough, when we marry, that, under the immemorial provisions of French law, we also take a vow of poverty, since by the very act of marriage itself we must put unconditionally into the hands of our husbands whatever fortune we may possess, and thenceforward have no power to dispose of anything, however small, except by their consent. In the first place, we make to our husbands a vow of obedience, and then couple with that a vow of chastity; for we are not permitted even to try to please other men. Furthermore, we are of necessity constantly devoting ourselves to the exercise of charity toward our husbands, toward our children, and toward our servants. Our obligations require us to

nurse our husbands in their sickness, to instruct our children as well as we can, and to give to our servants good advice and example. I am not, therefore, as one wishing to be good and to do good, at all envious of the nuns of the hospital. I must simply endeavor to fulfill faithfully my own duties, which I consider quite as difficult as the duties of any sisterhood, and, in some respects, perhaps, even more difficult, since I am not sustained by a multitude of exemplars and assistants all around me. On the contrary, the multiplicity of duties devolving on me, as a mother, has a constant tendency to confuse my mind, and to hinder me from performing perfectly any particular task upon which I may enter. By such thoughts as these I feel that my heart has been somewhat chastened, and, having renewed my solemn promises of obedience to God, I beseech Him to grant me a sufficiency of grace to be faithful to them."

LXIII.

"April 9, 1805.

"Here we are in an unusual state of excitement, both in the city and in the country. The Emperor Napoleon is to arrive here to-day with all his court. My sister is still here with me; and we are just now very much inconvenienced because we have to entertain Bishop Pradt, of Poitiers, who is the present chaplain of the Emperor. [This Bishop Pradt, of Poitiers, soon afterward became Archbishop of Malines, and was first celebrated for his obsequious courtiership, and then again for his gross ingratitude toward Napoleon, immediately after the downfall of the latter.] There are reasons why I would rather have Bishop Pradt as a guest than any other member of the Emperor's retinue. Everybody about us is gay and eager with expectation of the entrance among us of so many distinguished personages."

LXIV.

"LYONS, April 26, 1805.

"I came here with my sister only to see the Pope; and I have already seen him pass from the terrace of a garden very near the Archbishop's Palace, where he is stopping. Yesterday I attended the high mass celebrated by the Pope at the Church of Saint John. I saw the entire ceremonies very well, but had great difficulty in getting near enough to the altar to obtain a good view of the chief celebrant. This pious old man has, indeed, a saint-like physiognomy; and many of the Roman prelates who are with him are also men whose purity of personal appearance answers well to their holy calling."

LXV.

"May 12, 1805.

"Our fortune, though small, is gradually increasing. My husband has just purchased the homestead of Monsieur Ozenay. It has a good garden, and the house is well constructed and very spacious. After furnishing all the rooms handsomely, we will move there this summer.

"My husband allows me one hundred and fifteen dollars a month, and all the necessary vegetables and provisions obtainable from our two farms, for the housekeeping and for the payment of Alphonse's schooling. These allowances are more than sufficient. I am always in lively admiration of the providences of God to us, and am ready, at any time, to return to Him whenever He may require, and in whatever way He may indicate, everything which He has so graciously given me.

"My apartment is now finished. It is really very pretty. I am too well off in this world! In spite of the frequent trials with which God chastens me, I have more inward peace and more real happiness than I deserve.

My whole and only trust is in the Supreme Dispensator. I have just read a mystic and fascinating treatise upon the sweet virtue of trust in Providence, which has done me great good. Complete resignation to the will of Heaven, and perfect reliance on the promises of God, constitute to the believer a most inestimable and inexhaustible treasure."

LXVI.

"August 20, 1805.

"This beautiful and commodious room, wherein I installed myself yesterday afternoon, is probably the witness of the last change of apartment that I shall ever make. Indeed, I expect to die in it. [Her expectation was at last realized; she did die in that very room.] Alphonse arrived here yesterday. I am, I fear, destined to have a great deal of trouble with this child, who is already very difficult to manage. Two of his sisters will soon be well grown into young-ladyhood. When I see myself surrounded by my six beautiful children, I love every one of them equally, and feel proud and happy. I beseech the good Lord to enlighten me, and to give me the necessary intelligence and ability to perform my whole duty toward them all!"

LXVII.

"November 9, 1805.

"We have come to spend a week at the castle of Monceau, with my eldest brother-in-law, Monsieur de Lamartine. My two sisters-in-law, Mademoiselle de Lamartine, the angel of the family, and Madame de Villars, our terrestrial providence, are both here. There are also present some very amiable and worthy gentlemen of the neighborhood, among whom are Monsieur Blondel, the Abbot Bourdon, and the Commander de Folin, who are all old men of fine humor, and full of inexhaustible and instructive anecdotes. We lead here a very quiet

life; in fine weather we walk out; in the evenings most of our time is spent in playing parlor games and in telling stories. But I am not very well pleased with the condition of my health. I have a kind of burning sensation on my face; and I perceive that my complexion is becoming rather lustreless and dingy. I will not deny that I feel more or less concern on account of these unmistakable proofs of the coming on of old age. However, if the mere fact of my growing old is a humiliation, it is also, perhaps, a great grace, because it detaches me more and more from the world, by making me less attractive to the eyes of fashion and folly. I must, of course, simply and quietly yield to the inevitable. This resignation is required of me by Christian duty. Yet the truth is, nevertheless, that the consciousness of waning years causes me to suffer. Very prone am I to forget that thirty-eight winters have already passed over my head; and whatever reminds me of the fact of this gradual approach of senility is apt to awaken in me emotions of sadness rather than sentiments of pleasure. Sometimes I am so worldly-minded and selfish (not to say wicked) that I ask myself the question, Why could not the common law of nature be dispensed with in my case, so that I might have the power of preserving the charms of my youth even in old age? May it please Heaven to pardon the sin and weakness which I thus disclose in myself by giving expression to these vain and foolish thoughts!"

LXVIII.

"MILLY, July 6, 1806.

"Here I am once more in this pleasant retreat. At this place, more than at any other, I always seem to find myself at peace with everybody. I love the world, but now and then I like to rest from it, sometimes in absolute

retirement, and with such light and congenial occupations as my garden and my room afford me at Milly.

"My daughters and I ride upon donkeys, to visit the various sites and ruins of the neighborhood. We drink milk at the cottages, and talk with the countrymen, who know me very well, and who seem to love me, because I give them advice, and prescribe medicines for their children. All these little adventures and experiences give me great pleasure. We all like so much to be loved; and it is such an easy matter to be loved by these poor, unsophisticated country-people; and when hearts are true, and where love abounds, how time flies!"

LXIX.

"SAINT POINT, September 7, 1806.

"My husband has returned here, from the estates of the Abbot of Lamartine, near Dijon, where he always spends a part of every summer. So here we are at Saint Point, the residence which I still prefer to any other, in spite of the dilapidated condition of the mansion. I desire to establish here a well-furnished and well-regulated moral retreat. Quietude and solitude of heart are sometimes necessary for such thorough self-examination as may be conducive to our eternal welfare."

LXX.

"September 24, 1806.

"Many days have been passed by us here in retirement, as I had calculated they would be. Our only guest now is our pastor. He dines with us every day. Of late the weather has been very wet and unpleasant; but I have not yet felt gloomy. The day is never long enough for all I would like to do; and my strength is always exhausted in advance of the taste and eagerness which I have for my vocations.

"I go to church every morning at seven o'clock, as I had long since resolved to do with my children. We breakfast immediately after coming from church; then we attend to the minor household duties; then come the sewing, the reading of the Bible, the lesson in grammar, and the study of the history of France. All these occupations keep us busy up to the hour of dinner, without anybody having found the time too long. After dinner I give and take an hour's recreation, and sometimes a little more. Then we resume our work, while one of us engages in miscellaneous reading, which I always endeavor to make instructive, up to supper-time; after which the children learn poetry by heart, the history of the world, and geography. Afterward we go again to church, or pay our devotions at home; then we take a walk, and later in the evening, while I play at chess with my husband, the younger members of the family amuse themselves with childish games, and learn verses out of the fables of La Fontaine. Whenever and wherever I am living quietly with my husband and children, these employments and pastimes indicate very fairly the routine of our daily life. My great object is to set my children an example of true piety, and to have them always well occupied. Yesterday I received a letter from Alphonse. It brought me good news, so far as his health is concerned. He seems to be a sensible boy."

LXXI.

"MILLY, September 25, 1806.

"My husband has just sustained a new loss, this time of twenty-one thousand francs, through the failure of his wine-merchant. This is a terrible blow, and it has struck us all with great force; but my husband endures it without complaining, because the merchant himself is only

unfortunate in business. He is, indeed, a very honest man. He came in person to say that he had suspended payment, and was summoning together all his creditors, so that they may divide among themselves everything he has. He declares that he will keep nothing for himself. How can we fail to appreciate such upright conduct and not pity the man who has thus unintentionally injured us? But we shall be in very straitened circumstances all this year. As means readily available we had only the amount mentioned above, and now it is all lost! The will of God be done! I admire very much the tranquillity of my husband in these reverses. Yet, for his children's sake, and for my sake, he suffers a great deal. He is more than a man of iron, he is a man of steel, for the vicissitudes of this life.

"It had been arranged that Alphonse was to come home from college. I went to Mâcon on the 17th instant, to meet him. He arrived alone in the evening. I found him much better than I expected. He is now two inches taller than his mother; and although he is rather thin and pale, yet he is healthy and strong. In most respects he is an excellent youth. His teachers, the Jesuits, commend him for his present and prospective powers of mind. He has come back loaded with first prizes, wreaths, Latin discourses, Latin translations, Latin poetry, and French speeches; and yet, notwithstanding all his juvenile successes and honors, he is becomingly modest. But what gives me still more satisfaction and pleasure is the fact that he seems now to be really concerned to become pious. May God bless him, and preserve within him those precious gifts of grace, which are in themselves the foundation of the only riches that can ever make him supremely happy. After I had embraced Alphonse, I ran to the church and there thanked God, with tears stream-

ing down my cheeks, for my son's safe return, and for so many other blessings which He graciously grants me.

"It was not without some degree of pride that I presented Alphonse to all the family at Monceau. Only I do not think his manner of speaking is quite so gentle and respectful as it should be. Yet I fear to estrange him from me whom he loves so much by scolding him about it; and, on the other hand, I am afraid I may spoil him by being too lenient and indulgent to his faults. My God, what a difficult and responsible matter it is to bring a boy up into manhood! My husband and myself are both very much concerned to know what we shall try to make of him. He already manifests great fondness for the military profession, which is that of his father; but this war against Prussia is killing off so many good young men! and then, besides, the licentiousness of the army is always so fatal to innocence! May God enlighten us in our son's behalf!"

LXXII.

My gentle mother, whose manuscript I am now revising, returned to the city on the 25th of December, 1806, and here is what we read in her journal of January 1, 1807:

"This annual point of time tells me very plainly that I am advancing with rapid strides toward the eternal day. The virtues which I desire most earnestly to cultivate this year are urbanity and gentleness of intercourse with my fellow-creatures, and also the most perfect humility. It seems to me that these are the virtues of which the world just now has most need. As a general rule, I shall, I hope, desire and strive to speak very little of myself; to bear with patience the contradictions and humiliations to which I may be subjected; to have no studied or elaborate elegance in my toilet; never to reprove my

children, nor any one else, with ill humor; and never to exhibit any testiness of temper in discussion. It is my desire and purpose also never to say anything, if I can possibly help it, that would be likely to wound anybody's feelings, whether present or absent. These are the most important of my new resolutions; the list is long enough for one year; and the year itself will be well spent by me if I only prove myself steady and true to the intentions with which I have begun it."

LXXIII.

Nothing of special interest appears again in my mother's notes until the month of September, but there I read and transcribe as follows:

"My solitude is never a burden to me, but always a pleasure. I am now quite alone at Milly, with my children and my books. At present my most cherished companions are the works of Madame de Sévigné. This afternoon I took a long walk upon the Craz Mountain, which is behind the house above our vineyards. I was all alone. It is a real pleasure to me at this season of the year, in the afternoons and evenings, to wander thus alone, sometimes very far. I love the autumn, and nothing exhilarates me more than to walk about the country during these delightful days, without any other discourse than that which entertains me only through my own impressions. On these occasions my ideas are expansive, like the horizon, and upreaching to heaven. Nature excites within my heart a thousand pleasant cogitations, and, withal, a kind of melancholy, which charms me. Just what causes or constitutes this mysterious influence is more than I can explain; but I have come to regard it as something of a secret assimilation of our immortal spirits with the infinity of the works of God. When I turn

around and see, from the top of the mountain, the little light which shines in my children's chamber, I thank Providence for having given me this peaceful and secluded nest, wherein they find both shelter and comfort.

"I always begin and finish whatever I do with a brief prayer, which is like an inward song of the heart which no man hears; but Thou, O Lord, Thou hearest, since Thou hearest even the buzzing of the tiny insects in this little forest of heaths and weeds which I am now trampling under my feet."

The journal of the whole of this year, 1807, is filled with little else than the rigid and mysterious examinations of a conscience of the most scrupulous integrity; yet here and there are found the nervously expressed fears of a fond mother as to the common and uncommon dangers of an only son, whose morals and whose faith are exposed to the blasts of a wicked world. Having returned to the city to spend the winter of 1808, she there takes up the pen occasionally; but that ordinarily easy-working instrument of her thoughts now gives evidence of unusual irregularity and heaviness of movement in her hand. Nearly all of the year 1808, and much of the year 1809, are missing. Here, however, is an inkling of at least one of the little episodes which interested and affected the family meanwhile.

There was at Mâcon a young lady of respectable family, of a cultivated mind, and of a stylish beauty, who had inspired my mother's son with one of those inclinations, almost infantile, and entirely innocent, which are the premonitory symptoms rather than the real manifestations of love. Nevertheless, because of the disparity of age, both families were led to apprehend that this slight inclination might ultimately entail consequences which would not be agreeable or advantageous to either of the two houses.

It was resolved, therefore, to send the young man abroad, on a journey to Italy. They very reasonably supposed that the strong breezes of the Alps would cool off and blow away the fiery fancy of a too susceptible youth.

Here we will take up again the manuscript of my mother, whose thoughts soon began to concentrate more than ever before on plans and efforts for promoting the happiness of her son. She knew very well his passion for traveling, which, if indulged, would afford him an opportunity of seeing many strange and extraordinary things, the mere dreams of which, in his little town, had so greatly harassed his adolescence. Let us read :

LXXIV.

"Sunday, November 26, 1809.

"I am much interested now in reading the 'Memoirs of Madame Roland,' whose husband was a Minister of Government at the beginning of the Revolution. It is one of the strange facts of modern history that Madame Roland was guillotined. She was a woman of fine mind, and was possessed of many admirable traits of character. I sometimes think that all possible human virtues might have found in her happy and glorious lodgment and function if, in her youth, she had only not given way to that false and mischievous wit which dragged her down and bound her to a detestable philosophy, which was then so much in vogue, and which caused both her loss and our own; for it was, in fact, the sheer folly and madness of those opinions which finally led her to the scaffold. Her Memoirs are very well written. They have interested me exceedingly; only I would advise the skipping of all those passages wherein she makes light of religion, for of that she speaks very disparagingly.

"I would not permit my son to read Madame Roland's

Memoirs, although he pointedly requested of me the privilege of perusing them. But I stood my ground firmly, and did not yield. I am well aware that he can obtain all the books he wants, without my knowledge or consent; but, as the least that I can do, I am determined not to have to reproach myself with having sanctioned his undiscerning selections. The thought has also occurred to me that, in all probability, most of us give ourselves too great liberty in the matter of reading any and every sort of book, under the false impression or pretext that there is no longer any danger. This is always simply perilous. Faith can be shaken at any age; and as for licentious thoughts and things, we are always forbidden to put our minds voluntarily on them. We are, indeed, very apt to feel too much at ease among every class and kind of publication. It is only by depriving ourselves of those readings which, though agreeable, may yet be dangerous, that we can make sure of a proper circumcision of the mind.

"Monsieur Ligorgne, of Mâcon, has just died, at the age of ninety. He was a very learned man, and had corresponded with J. J. Rousseau on religion, philosophy, and other abstruse subjects. He was an intimate friend of Monsieur de Lamartine, my brother-in-law; and, through the impulses of pure friendship, he gave Alphonse a regular course of lessons in mathematics. He was one of those great monuments of the past which we could but grieve to see crumbling to pieces. We love Time when it is young; we venerate Time when it is old.

"Alphonse will spend the winter at Lyons, with a view of polishing his manners, and in order that he may acquire a better knowledge of the world. He went with Monsieur de Balathier, a young gentleman of correct principles. We are very glad of this friendship, which will, we trust,

restrain him from the company of rash and reckless young men.

"I am now here in companionship with only my five daughters. It is a very easy matter to lead them in the right path. Our life is almost like that of a convent. In the morning we read together several pages of religious literature. Then we study ancient history. These subjects still interest me quite as profoundly as they do my children. After dinner we generally do some needlework. At dusk we recite together our vesper exercises, and, later in the evening, we sometimes read one of the comedies of Molière. I consider that there is nothing wrong in this. Yet, in reading the works of this dramatist, I always make it a practice to skip the most dangerous words and sentences. Afterward, just before retiring for the night, we all say the Lord's Prayer in common; and when that is over, I frequently make a brief exhortation applicable to the duties which we owe to God, to our neighbors, and to ourselves. It is thus that my days go by with unwonted rapidity. May God grant that this course of life may be one of innocence and advantage to our souls! I sometimes think that if I were now free, I would soon withdraw into retirement from the world and consecrate myself entirely to the service of God. But it would seem that we always desire something different from what God intends. How infinitely better for us all if we would constantly desire and do only those things which are well pleasing in the sight of Heaven!"

LXXV.

"My husband is now in Mâcon, at the General Council of the Department, presided over by Monsieur Denon. Monsieur Denon is an old man in body, though young in mind. His conversational powers are simply wonderful.

He came to see us, and narrated his travels in Egypt with the Emperor. He thrilled us with descriptions of battles under close fire. He overwhelms my husband with compliments and distinctions, and has proposed to have him elected to the National Legislature. But my husband has told me frankly that he might find himself placed between his sense of duty and his fortune, and that he would greatly prefer to sacrifice all worldly advantages to the integrity and peace of his conscience. I admire the nobleness of his nature and respect his motives too profoundly to urge him to act differently; although my vanity, disguised in dreamy visions of better fortunes for my children, would rather induce me to desire the honors and the influence which might be expected to flow from the proffered office."

LXXVI.

"January 7, 1810.

"I am all the while uneasy about Alphonse, because of the dangerous idleness in which he is now passing most of his time. It is on his account, just now, that I have special need of God's assistance. His passions are beginning to develop themselves; and I fear that his youth and his manhood may be very stormy. He is often agitated, gruff, and melancholy, and scarcely knows what he desires. Ah, if he could only become cognizant of the only good thing that would be certain to make him happy! Some of our relatives blame us for allowing him to go to spend the winter at Lyons on only his own promise of good behavior; but they do not know all our reasons for having done so. We must let people say what they will, and meanwhile do what we ourselves think best. Alphonse seems much changed by a greater knowledge of men and things, and is more and more inclined to study. We trust that the numerous resources of a large city will

enable him to spend his time pleasantly and profitably. It would be more difficult for him to avoid the dangers of idleness in a small town like this, where there are so many allurements to vice. Besides, we are very glad, indeed, that he is nowadays so seldom seen here, because he is of a remarkably large stature for one of his age, and the mere sight of him might tempt the military agents of the Emperor to require us to enlist him in the army; and then, too, they might refuse the substitute whom we would employ to take his place."

LXXVII.

"MILLY, April 11, 1810.

"I came here yesterday to stay overnight with Cecilia and Eugenia. It was fine weather, and I was just in the mood to enjoy one of those bright spring mornings which can be found only in the country. So, to-day, almost as soon as it was light, I went out into the garden, where I must have spent as much as three hours most delightfully. The trees are loaded with buds and blossoms, and the soft air is balmy with their fragrance. At intervals I closed my book to look at the tender leaves just beginning to shoot forth, and to listen to the warbling birds and humming insects. Everything in nature seems full of new life and vigor and beauty; and what with reading and reflecting, what with gazing and dreaming, thanking in my heart the great Author of all for His many benefits and blessings, and trying to profit as much as possible by them, so the hours passed. It makes me feel inexpressibly happy,—this enchanting calmness and peacefulness of the country, this lovely aspect of nature in the early days of spring-time. Alas, I must return to the city, to stay there I know not how long! Still, I always try to be content with whatever God pleases to send me, and my chief

desire now is to do my whole duty wherever and whenever it may call me.

"On Sunday I had Monsieur Morel to dine with us. He is an artist, architect, draughtsman, and musician, all in one, and good in all. It was he who designed the most admired of the English gardens around Paris; and he is now here to execute drawings for the new pleasure-grounds of Monsieur Rambuteau. I happened to meet him one day, and learned that he was, many years ago, a particular friend of my father and mother. I was quite pleased with this information, and accordingly invited him to dinner, in order to cultivate his acquaintance still further. Although, unfortunately, he is now more than eighty years of age, yet, thanks to his intelligent and temperate habits of life, he has thus far preserved all his faculties unimpaired. He says that he has never drunk wine nor spirituous liquors; and this confirms me in my own previous resolution never to drink any myself.

"Monsieur de Rambuteau is here for several days, and I hope and expect to see him again to-morrow, when I shall probably hear from him some details about the Emperor's marriage, which he attended. They have, it is said, tried to make the ceremony very magnificent; and it is admitted that the illuminations were the most brilliant of the kind ever seen. In thinking of it I could not help reflecting, as I have often done before, on the emptiness and triviality of the things which occupy the minds of men. Even in this very case—an occasion of so much so-called splendor and pomp—one of their greatest pleasures was manifested in placing side by side vast numbers of lighted but insignificant little lamps! The old proverb fitly applies again: Vanity of vanities; all is vanity. A gleam of light, a great noise, a wreath of smoke, and—

there is glory! Is it worth the while to wish this sort of thing for my son?"

LXXVIII.

"MILLY, April 17, 1811.

"I have spent a most delightful day at Milly, all alone. The weather was superb. I walked a great deal, and read the first volume of the 'Itinerary from Paris to Jerusalem,' an excellent and very interesting work by Monsieur de Chateaubriand.

"Yesterday I went to Changrenon to call on Madame Rambuteau. Her husband, sister, and father, Monsieur de Narbonne, are all with her at present. I was anxious to see Monsieur de Narbonne again, as he used to be very intimate with my eldest brother, who was formerly Secretary of Legation in Holland, and afterward occupied other important and honorable positions. He spoke to me in terms of high esteem of my brother. He is an amiable man, and is deservedly in great favor with the Emperor. Indeed, he is just now frequently spoken of as the one most likely to be appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was quite attentive to Alphonse, and invited him to go and see him at Paris; all of which, however, may prove more dangerous than useful to my pretty boy. I do not ask the distinctions or the grandeurs of this world for myself or for my family. Yet I would like above all things to see my children well established in respectable but modest careers, which, after securing them a peaceful happiness in this world, would safely conduct them to the eternal joys of the next."

LXXIX.

"October 11, 1811.

"Alphonse has written me a letter from Rome, full of enthusiasm over the splendid monuments of the Eternal

City. How heartily I should like to be with him! But I am really too poor to become a traveler for pleasure. His uncles and aunts are helping us to pay the expenses of his journeyings; and they gave us yesterday, for him, three hundred and twenty-five dollars. With an additional sum of about one hundred dollars he can, if he will practice economy, spend the winter very pleasantly at Rome and Naples. But he is rather too young and overflowing with imagination to be left entirely to himself in those far-off lands. I longed to see him go; and I now long to see him return. Night and morning, and twenty times a day, I commend him to the kind and merciful care of Providence.

"What a sad and perilous misfortune it is for a parent to have a son who has nothing to do!

"In spite of the great reluctance of our family to see Alphonse serve under Bonaparte, perhaps we ought to have thought somewhat more of our son, and less of our own opinions and prejudices.

"I hope his friend and school-fellow, Monsieur Aymon de Virieu, will soon go and join him. He is a young man of riper judgment, who might be very useful to him under many circumstances."

The last foregoing lines were written just at the time when I was leaving Rome to go to Naples, and while I was leading that half-vagabond, half-poetic mode of life related in the substantially true episode of "Graziella," as that incidental narrative appears in the first volume of my "Confidences."

LXXX.

There is a great blank here, and the journal is not resumed until after the return of her son from his travels, July 24, 1812:

"I have been here now two weeks last Tuesday, the 7th

of July. My husband came the day before with Cecilia. During the first few days I was afraid I would find it wearisome, and did not feel the pleasure I usually experience when I go into the country. Since then, however, everything has gone along admirably and delightfully. My solitary walks, working and reading with the children, attending to two sick people in the neighborhood,—everything, in fact, has interested me as usual; and, all things considered, I have been far more happy than I deserved to be. God only knows how very little I do deserve His grace. This retired and tranquil life has, however, just been rudely interrupted by a certain domestic event."

LXXXI.

"August 10, 1812.

"Here I am at Montculot, in the beautiful residence of my brother-in-law, the Abbot of Lamartine. In the solitude of a cloister, surrounded by quiet woods and softly-murmuring fountains, surely I ought to find rest and peace. Yet my serenity of mind is by no means complete. The cares of a mother follow me everywhere, always here. Ah, how continually I have to reproach myself! How extreme and imperfect I am in everything! In the world, entirely worldly; in retirement, austere to excess; always too sensitive to the influences of surrounding objects, whatever they may be, and always yielding to their force without opposing my own. In short, I suffer; I deserve to suffer!

"Much of my time I pass in reading, and some in laying my troubles before God in prayer. I am strongly impressed with the brevity of life, and with the necessity of preparing for eternity. I often try to imbue myself thoroughly with an idea which I remember once to have written down, that this life ought itself to be considered

a kind of purgatory, and that, however painful it may be to bear my troubles, I should not forget that they are sent by God, and are much lighter than my many short-comings and demerits might justly entail. What I am now most anxious about is the settling in life of my six children. When I think seriously on the subject, I become a prey to all sorts of gloomy and distressing anticipations; and yet I know it is unreasonable, if not wicked, to let these forebodings torment me thus. God has never failed to come to my aid under any and all circumstances; and now, with greater confidence than ever, I ought certainly to expect His help in this matter, the most important of all my aims in this life."

LXXXII.

"December 17, 1812.

"To-day I returned from Milly, with the purpose of locating permanently in Mâcon. In passing through Changrenon, I dined with Madame de Rambuteau. It is always a great pleasure to me to dine with her, or have her dine with me; for then we are certain to get to talking about people in Paris, whom we knew there when we were girls together."

LXXXIII.

"January 31, 1813.

"At last we are going to announce, to-morrow, the marriage of our eldest daughter, Cecilia, to Monsieur de Cessia, a nobleman of the Department of Doubs. Cecilia is really very beautiful, and almost too young for him; but, on the other hand, she is reasonable, and he is of good disposition. He was severely wounded at sixteen years of age, while serving in the army of Condé, and is now a little lame in consequence. He has a father eighty-seven years of age, who is now very austere and arbitrary, and two unmarried brothers. It is, we think, an excel-

lent match, which will reasonably insure the happiness of our daughter; but still it is a momentous venture, in regard to which I cannot help feeling all the solicitude of a mother.

"Alphonse is now in Paris, where he has been very cordially received by Monsieur de Pansey, who is a member of the Cabinet Council, and President of the Court of Appeals. His cousin also, Madame de Pré, who lives with Monsieur de Pansey, her uncle, has been very friendly toward him. Monsieur de Pansey is a very learned and amiable man, but is now quite old. It astonishes me not a little that, standing as he does on the very verge of the grave, and about to leave this foolish world and all its vanities, his ears should still be so sensitive to the alluring voice of ambition. Truly, ambition is a thing which seems to have an irresistible music of its own for the acoustic organs of all human beings, and for every period of life.

"I have just been in Alphonse's room to look over his books, and to burn such of them as I might deem detrimental to his morals. I cannot help feeling that it may be wrong on my part to try to prevent in this way the natural development of his opinions and judgment; but, in any event, it may have the effect of inducing him to read and reflect more carefully, when he finds how much, on his account, I fear the influence of certain books. I found on his table the 'Émile' of J. J. Rousseau, and permitted myself to read several pages in it. I do not blame myself for this; for those pages were simply sublime, and have really benefited me very much. I think I will even copy and preserve some of the finer passages. His style is so grand! What a great pity it is that his writings should be so generally poisoned by seductive contradictions and extravagances! I sometimes incline

to the opinion that many of his dissertations were purposely written to mislead the faith of young people. I shall burn this book 'Émile,' and also 'The New Héloïse,' which is even still more dangerous; in this, that it excites the passions while giving, at the same time, a wrong direction to the mind. What a misfortune that such a great genius as Rousseau's should border so closely upon madness! or can it be that his genius enabled him to see things in a truer light, and that the madness is ours instead of his? This is possible. My own faith, however, is strong, and, as I trust, above all temptation; so that I fear nothing for myself, but much for my son.

"Alphonse has just been the cause of a great sorrow to me. His uncles and aunts have received from Lyons and Italy several unexpectedly large bills of debts contracted during his travels. The family seem to be impressed with the conviction that I am spoiling him, and they are now unanimous in holding me responsible for his imprudent and disorderly conduct. They have emphatically reproached me, and I have shed many tears over this newly-arisen family trouble. Yet, alas, the accusations against me are but too true! The faults of my child are only, in this case, a fuller development of my own faults. Why have I not been more justly severe toward him from the time when he first began to err? It is true that he would now feel my displeasure more keenly than that of any one else; but perhaps he would not continue to love me with the same passion, and, later in life and in graver circumstances, the fear of afflicting me might no longer be a matter of filial conscience with him. Everything will be paid next week; but that does not prevent the necessity of my prepaying now, in listening to the just complaints of friends, and with bitter tears, a large part

of the penalty of the frivolities and revels of my poor child.

"He is now at Paris. Monsieur de Larnaud, an excellent man, of more than ordinary ability, who lives in the same house with him, has written in confidence to my brother-in-law, with whom he is very intimate, saying that his nephew's condition of health was causing uneasiness; that he was being led by his false friends into a passion for gambling; that he was spending his nights around the gaming-tables of Monsieur de Livry, at whose house he might easily lose all his money in a single hour; that, although he was working part of the daytime with a great deal of application and talent, yet gambling, study, and loss of sleep were obviously breaking his constitution, and that his family ought to take him away from Paris, at all hazards, before it should be too late.

"I therefore left immediately for Paris with my second daughter, Eugenia, whom I had fully taken into my confidence. My husband, in leaving home to go on a visit to the Abbot of Lamartine, in Burgundy, had left some money in his desk. I took it all, and received more from my friend, Madame Paradis, from my brother-in-law, Monsieur de Lamartine, and also from my sister-in-law. I then wrote to my husband, informing him of everything, hoping thereby to avoid the scene that would be certain to follow if he himself should have to administer to our son the first reproaches. On arriving in Paris, I thought it best not to go directly to his hotel, for fear that his surprise might cause him a too great and too painful emotion. Besides, after the letter of this good Monsieur de Larnaud, I was trembling lest my boy's face should show too conspicuously the effects of dissipation, and lest also I myself should faint away with excitement if I saw him without some previous preparation. Accordingly,

in the first place, I resolved to see privately Monsieur de Larnaud, in order to explain and prepare everything. While it was still broad daylight I got out of our carriage at a furnished hotel in Richelieu Street, not far from Alphonse's lodgings. O God, how acutely I suffered in postponing the pleasure of embracing my son, and in awaiting, perhaps until the next day, the visit or the response of Monsieur and Madame de Larnaud!

"Exhausted with anxiety, I was seated upon a sofa, weeping, and praying, while Eugenia stood at the open window, watching the carriages going to the opera or to the theatre. Suddenly I heard Eugenia scream, and say, 'Mamma, come quickly, I think I see Alphonse himself!' Running to the window, I recognized him at once. He was seated in an elegant buggy, himself driving, and by his side was sitting another young man, of handsome and pleasing appearance. My son looked very gay and animated, which did much to reassure me. There was no doubt about it, it was really Alphonse, and nobody else. My anxieties all departed at the happy sight of him. I did not care to interfere with his probable plans for the evening, and so resolved at once to wait until next day before going to see him.

"After passing a very pleasant night, I arose early in the morning, impatient to see my boy, and yet dreading the effect which my unexpected arrival might produce upon him. I was apprehensive that I might find him sick and suffering, and reluctant to leave with me; and I had every reason to suppose that his money affairs were in great disorder. At last I wrote him a letter, telling him of my journey, and the motives of it. He came at once, and seemed delighted to see us, though hurt at the step we had taken. His health did not seem so bad as I had feared to find it. He told me that, on my account, he

would return to Mâcon, but that he would not have been willing to do so with any one else in the world. All he asked of me was to allow him several days, during which time he might conveniently arrange his affairs. I gave him one week, and was not at all sorry of this opportunity to let Eugenia see something of Paris."

Here follow descriptions of various important features of Paris, including museums and walks. She and Eugenia both wanted to go to the theatre, but they refrained from scruples of conscience.

"Early in the afternoon Alphonse drove out with us to Saint Cloud. In my younger days, when my mother was educating the children of the Duke of Orleans, I spent many months at this royal resort. How happy I was in those times! I left there when I was only fifteen years of age, and had never seen the place since, although I have often wished to revisit the scene of so many innocent and delightful associations. I walked with Alphonse and Eugenia all over the park, pointing out one by one the particular trees and spots where I used to play in the days of my girlhood. I should have been glad to see once more the old familiar apartments of the palace, but the Empress Maria Louisa was occupying them at the time, and I did not deem it proper to solicit the privilege of inspection.

"I have given all my money to Alphonse to enable him to settle his gambling debts. After winning considerable amounts at first, he lost heavily, as is usually the case before such accounts are finally balanced.

"I have allowed myself to be persuaded by Monsieur and Madame de Larnaud to go with them to the opera. They assured me that this peculiar entertainment, being only a sort of school for musical education, was not included in the interdictions of the Church. I am now

very glad that I went to the opera, for I had formed an exaggerated idea of it. I experienced none of that astonishment and intoxication of mind of which I had heard so much, but was rather touched with a general feeling of pity for mankind, saying to myself, Now at last I am looking at that world-renowned combination of all the arts and talents and magic powers! Though, forsooth, is this all there is of it? Fudge! It is at best but a sort of puppet-show; elegant, it is true, but still with the same childish sports; masks, ghosts, devils, alcoholic fires, grimaces, and gestures, and turnings, and twistings, and contortions of all possible kinds; and curtained machines whose wires, intended to be invisible, are only half concealed! O man! how weak thou art in all things, even in folly! And when at that very same opera I saw people weary of living, the languishing victims of sheer idleness, who went there every day to gape and sleep away a few hours, oh, then, how deeply I pitied them! But, as I have already said, I am glad to have had an opportunity to see and hear the opera, and so to find out what is considered one of the greatest pleasures of this world! The entire spectacle, fringed and ornamented with a gorgeous paraphernalia of nonsense, lasted about three hours.

"At last I have snatched Alphonse from the Parisian whirlpools of seduction. Returning by way of Rieux, adjoining which place is my father's old homestead, I spent there most pleasantly a fortnight with my sister. The day before my departure we celebrated the memory of our father and mother near the tomb where their honored remains lie buried.

"My husband and the whole family received me very tenderly, but were quite cool in their manner toward Alphonse. We have moved back to Milly. Here my

prodigal but precious son has resigned himself very well to our solitary mode of life, diligently occupying himself the whole day in his room, reading and writing. In the evening we gather around the fireside, entertaining ourselves with our own affairs and with the affairs of our neighbors, talking about the late disasters to our armies, and grieving over the terrible misfortunes under which the madness of Bonaparte has brought our poor France. The tide is now setting in against him throughout all Europe. What, indeed, will become of us if France be invaded by all the countless foreign armies which he has gone so far out of his way to raise up against us in Spain, in Russia, and in Germany? Great God, how dearly all States and nations purchase the pretended glory of conquerors!

"All our unmarried men are being drafted into the military service; taxes are increasing heavily; and our legislators are busy in discussing schemes for raising additional revenues. We have had to sell our horse as the readiest means of providing ourselves with money to meet certain necessary and emergent expenses."

LXXXIV.

"December 31, 1813.

"We have taken refuge in Mâcon. Every day the enemy is announced. They are said to have passed Geneva already. I have been to Milly, there to hide away at all hazards a little wheat, as a last resource in case of great need. I wonder what will become of us! What a year of fatal fortunes for France this has been, which brings to such a frightful end the bloody dream of Bonaparte! To-morrow commences the New Year; but what would it be were it not for the hope of a speedy and permanent change for the better?"

It is evident from the foregoing remarks that my mother was hoping for the fall of Bonaparte and for the return of the Bourbons, the kings of her childhood.

LXXXV.

"January 9, 1814.

"The enemy is at Besançon and near Lyons, and it is now apprehended that we may soon have in our neighborhood a field of battle. Still, I am not so much disturbed as, under the circumstances, many might suppose I would be. We generally recover our presence of mind in the presence of slowly-approaching danger, and our courage is apt to gather in all our reserved and scattered forces. I firmly believe and hope in God.

"People hereabout are in a state of supreme excitement, disputing among themselves and forming different parties, according to their varying opinions and conjectures, all of which at this time renders society rather disagreeable for me. With all earnestness, I try to say nothing contrary to that spirit of peace and charity which ought always to distinguish the conduct of a Christian. Sometimes, however, worldly considerations get the mastery over me, and I blush for being so meanly temperate and time-serving. Yet even on these occasions I perceive that I am often judged harshly; but I quietly submit to these misjudgments, as I do to everything else. I am burdened with a multitude of vocations and with enormous expenses on account of our large family of children, while at the same time I have but little money to meet the current needs and demands of the household. My trip to Paris, and my payment there of the debts of Alphonse, have left us in a sad plight financially; and in consequence my husband has been obliged to curtail very materially our expenses of living."

The whole journal, up to the 10th of March, 1814, contains nothing but a broken narrative of the manœuvring of the French and Austrian armies, occupying and surrendering by turns the city of Mâcon and the surrounding villages. The terrible noise of the battle of the 10th of March, between the troops of Augereau and those of the Austrian general Bianchi, at the very gates of the city, is still reverberating through the long and perilous hours in the house of this poor mother, trembling for the safety of both her children and herself. We copy:

"Another great battle on the 10th instant; the French, to the number of twelve thousand, trying to rout the Austrians. The battle lasted from seven o'clock in the morning till four o'clock in the afternoon, with equal ardor on both sides, but at last the French were repulsed. The losses were about equal on both sides, the number of killed and wounded amounting to more than four thousand. The cannon have been continually booming, and the wounded passing, without stopping, all this long, frightful day!

"During the night and the next day after the battle the houses were pillaged in nearly all the villages surrounding Mâcon. Several mansions in the city, and nearly every residence in the suburbs known as Saint Antoine and Barre, were also robbed. Many excesses of the worst kind have been committed. Oh, the shocking and deadly fruits of war!

"The curate and I, with several other ladies, went to the headquarters of General Bianchi, to beg of him to put a stop to these lawless and brutal misdeeds. He received us kindly, but seemed rather to doubt his ability to cause at once a discontinuance of the pillage. I think, however, that since yesterday he has had some of the plun-

derers punished. All night a great many horsemen have been passing by in silence under our windows."

LXXXVI.

"March 17, 1814.

"My daughter Cecilia, having come from the Department of Doubs, was confined at my house on the 9th of March, amid the awful peals of cannon and the distressful outcries of the wounded in the streets. A great many troops are now here, and we are overrun with people whom we are obliged to feed. We have a General in the house, and furnish the table for him and for all his attendants, to the number of twenty-eight, and oftentimes more. It is but the shadow of an exaggeration to say that we are completely ruined.

"Alphonse is at Milly, where there are also three hundred soldiers. Four officers, with their servants and horses, are quartered upon our premises. New battles are expected daily and hourly; but I sincerely hope and pray that we may be spared the pain of again having to listen to the horrible sounds of two armies in desperate and deadly conflict. The French troops are encamped near Villefranche, and the Austrians here and hereabout.

"Alphonse went, on the 10th instant, with a son of Monsieur de Pierreclos, to witness the great battle near Villefranche. They were almost surrounded, for a few minutes, by a body of Austrians, who were stealthily advancing under shelter of a hill; but they were saved by the speed of their horses, several balls having passed through their clothes during their flight, and one of their steeds having been slightly wounded. They were able to reach Pierreclos without further fright or harm; and from there they went to Milly, which the enemy had already evacuated.

"Yesterday there was still another battle near Villefranche, in which the French were routed. They say the loss was very great on both sides. Many of the wounded have been brought here. Great God, when wilt Thou be pleased to turn away Thy wrath? Oh, forgive us now, and cause our bitter war to cease!"

LXXXVII.

"Sunday, March 20, 1814.

"Two new officers and many soldiers, with body-guard and sentinels, found lodgment upon our premises last night. At last, thank God, they have all gone. These enforced entertainments, even under the laws and provisions of compensation, cost treasures, over and above what the more abandoned soldiers bruise and break and steal."

LXXXVIII.

"Thursday, April 7, 1814.

"Lyons was taken by the Austrians on the 20th ultimo, the very day on which I last wrote. General Augereau, commanding the French troops, stopped fighting when driven to the gates of the city, and the mayor surrendered. The French army was given time to retire, passing through the gate of Guillotière. This army is now in the south, and is everywhere suffering defeat after defeat. There have been no important disturbances in Lyons. It is very fortunate for us that the city did not hold out any longer; for we would have been irretrievably ruined by the detention or continuance of the troops in our neighborhood. Since the surrender we have seen fewer soldiers, and have been comparatively restful.

"Alphonse has had an opportunity of coming to us from Milly and Saint Point, where his father left him to save our property and administer the affairs of the two

villages of which he had been elected mayor. He has succeeded beyond our expectations, and has made himself beloved by all the peasantry, whom he has reassured as much as possible. There have been no disorders whatever."

LXXXIX.

"April 10, 1814.

"It would seem now, according to current reports, that our poor France, in great part actually dead, is about to rise up out of the awful condition of oppression, tyranny, and agony, in which we have been for the past two years, and come to life again. Lyons, Bordeaux, and Paris have hoisted the white cockade; and Bonaparte has been solemnly deposed from the throne which he knew not how to occupy and defend, and will have to go to the island of Elba, which he is to hold as sovereign, with an income of six millions a year. A courier has this instant arrived from Lyons with a white flag. Here, in the Town Council, they are actively and ardently debating whether or not to signify their approval of the deposition of Bonaparte, on the one hand, and the reign of the Bourbons, on the other. My husband, my son-in-law, Monsieur de Cessia, and Alphonse, all went, and earnestly advocated the sanction of these measures.

"In my opinion there are no other means of safety for France but reconciliation and concert with Europe under the restored sovereignty of her old banished royal family. Nevertheless, it might be unwise for one here to declare himself on the side of the Bourbons. My extreme ardor in expressing my own opinions on this subject has already caused me some inconvenience, and I have been warmly denounced as being very imprudent. Touching some of the military events we have no positive information. It is said that Paris was taken on the 31st of March; and yet

as late as to-day, the 10th of April, we have received no official news of it. It was even feared that those who had given honest expression to their views and preferences would be insulted; and, indeed, we ourselves heard many abusive and threatening words while walking in the evening.

"Another day, and still nothing from Paris. The suspense and anxiety were greatly increasing, when, about ten o'clock, a courier arrived bringing the decision of the Senate, which solemnly proclaimed the deposition of the Emperor. Joy reigned supreme, and was redoubled in the evening when intelligence was received of the abdication of Napoleon and the restoration of the Bourbons. The weather was superb, and the crowd of people promenading was enormous. Men who scarcely knew each other talked together in the most friendly and familiar spirit, while others met and embraced each other as if they were really intoxicated with delight. Then there was a general illumination, during which the promenading and the mirthful conversation were still continued. The next day there was an official proclamation of everything which had been done, with music and great and glorious solemnity. 'Long live the king!' was the universal and hearty utterance of the populace. That day I had at breakfast and dinner many members of the Department Council, who had come to Mâcon in compliance with special summons from the Governor of Lyons.

"I have just come back to Milly with my three little girls, and shall be very glad to remain at rest here for a few days, so that I may be able to restore a greater degree of calm and order to my ideas. To-morrow I shall try to write down some of the reflections which have forcibly impressed me during the occurrence of all these great events."

In the following reflections, written at a most memorable epoch in the history of France, and in the quiet contemplation of her country home, we see and feel the explosion of the long-pent-up feelings which animated the breast of a mother against the military domination of Bonaparte and in favor of the restoration of a more moderate government, embellished in her imagination by the happy recollections of her childhood. This page is the lyrical expression of hope after the almost utter forlornness of despair. A system of government so thoroughly detested by women could not possibly have been so popular as the party historians of to-day represent it. Let us peer into the open heart of this mother of a family:

"MILLY, Friday, April 15, 1814.

"Was there ever, O Lord, a creature more happily burdened with Thy benefits and blessings than I am at this very moment and in all these present days? And, at the same time, was there ever one more ungrateful? I am advancing in age, and am always surrounded and guarded by the special protection of Thy divine mercy! In the midst of all the evil that has passed around me, I have experienced no great private misfortune. All my children are around me, alive and well. Even my son has been preserved to me, while so many other sons of promise have been lost forever. He is growing in health and in strength, and is even now in good condition physically and mentally. All that I ask for him from God—and this I ask without ceasing—is to make him a good Christian. I constantly check as much as I can the impulses of ambition, which are always but too ready to spring up in my heart, and am only concerned—I repeat it—for the good of my son's soul. But, in asking for him this great good, and in really desiring only that, I

am yet fearfully lukewarm and apathetic. This is the just retribution of God upon me for having been, and for being still, too much attached to the world. In delivering myself up to the false joys and dissipations of life, I have failed to secure the full richness of heavenly grace.

"Once everything moved me to closer communion with God. I was then supremely happy in solitude, always finding therein an inexpressible charm in elevating my thoughts above all the things of earth. Now it is only by the greatest effort that I can in any degree reinvest myself with this religious enthusiasm. It may, however, to some extent, be due to the effects of age weighing upon my senses. Yet my health is now excellent, being much better than it used to be. This is still another great favor for which I ought to be most thankful to Heaven.

"My daughters also are unusually well and hearty, all of them growing up around me (I may truthfully say it) in beauty and virtue; for their features are agreeable, and their piety is both active and habitual. Sometimes, indeed, their religious emotions and observances threaten to run into excesses and scruples which I am obliged to oppose.

"Cecilia and her husband are still with us. Their little daughter promises to be pretty. Her mother is nursing her with success. Our fortune now seems very likely to improve; and we enjoy, more than ever before, the respect of the public. This is a brief enumeration of a part of the benefits with which God has mercifully blessed me. Why, then, am I not always at His feet to thank Him? Why am I not every day more diligently occupied in doing my duty to God, by proclaiming His glory, and by prudently employing in His service all the

precious moments He gives me, whilst so many of my countrymen are suffering such cruel pangs?

"The fall of Napoleon is, indeed, a conspicuous example of the justice of God, and of His long-suffering patience. The Almighty is patient because He is eternal. The sublimity of this thought has often impressed me. It is, I think, from Saint Augustine, or from Bossuet. Was it not—and is it not even yet—a terrible temptation for many restless persons to see that colossus of mere earthly ambition and glory exalted upon such a towering pedestal of iniquity, if I may so speak? For several years all Europe seemed subject to his power. He had only to wish, only to undertake, and everything succeeded even far beyond his own thoughts and expectations. So long as he was the instrument of God, nothing stopped the course of his conquests, of his devastations, of the general overturning wrought by his fatal hand over the face of the whole earth. The question might be asked, Of what use is virtue, since vice, carried to the greatest extreme of imagination, has such a brilliant success? Did it not require an almost superhuman effort not to feel and utter this blasphemy? But wait, ye men of little faith, wait only a moment longer, and ye shall witness the waning power of this prodigy, falling down still more rapidly than he mounted up, as if struck by a mighty thunderbolt from heaven! Future historians will seek a record of the deeds of this bold bad man, who, when he dies, will be buried under what is falsely and absurdly called his glory, under the ruins of nations, and beneath vast masses of the mouldering skeletons of victims who were sacrificed on the altar of the insatiable ambition of a single tyrant!

"The kingdom of Saint Louis is about to be revived, in harmony with the kingdom of God!

"Sing now unto the Lord a new song! Yes, let us sing of the power and goodness of God over all the earth!

"Let all the mothers of the land, who will now be able to preserve alive the fruits of their wombs, join me in singing aloud the song of salvation!"

It is not at all difficult of comprehension that a son whose own blood was derived from the veins of this mother, and who, besides, in Italy, and in history, had copiously imbibed the spirit of ancient liberty, could never be in favor of Napoleon.

XC.

"May 9, 1814.

"My husband has been elected a member of the provincial deputation for laying before the throne the adhesion of the General Council of the Department. He left Milly on the 28th of April. I shall start immediately for Lyons, as I would much like to meet there the Duchess of Orleans on her passage through the city, which, according to public announcements, will be very soon."

This proposed journey did not take place. My father returned from Paris after having seen the princes, to whom from first to last, though often silently, he had been invariably faithful. He was at once offered the positions and pensions to which he was entitled, and which were given with lavish hand to all the brave and loyal officers who, like him, had retired from their regiments rather than swear fidelity to a cause in violation of their original oaths of allegiance; but he refused everything, saying that he needed no help, being amply able to take care of himself and family, and not wishing to burden the State with another charge at a time when France was already staggering under the heavy load of loans and taxes neces-

sitated by so many formidable revolutions and invasions. In her journal, my mother expresses very strongly her great admiration for the modest and patriotic disinterestedness of her husband. Her good heart seems to have become calm again after these agitations.

XCI.

"MILLY, Saturday, June 17, 1814.

"It is only here at Milly that I am enabled to recover well my peace and freedom of mind. Only here, and especially during the little journeys which I make almost alone, do I find myself in condition to account exactly for what is passing and repassing in my soul. I have been here now two days, and must leave this evening, much to my regret. The country is particularly delightful just now; and, in this season of the year, I am always happy at Milly, provided I am not suffering from some physical pain, or from some real heartfelt sorrow; and even then, there is scarcely any ailment of mind or body that this sweet charm of nature does not relieve at last.

"Only yesterday I read one of the many sagacious remarks of Madame de Staël, who declares that, in order to really appreciate and enjoy the beautiful in nature, it is necessary to be affected with either love or religion. We may strike out the first of these conditions, but the last should be carefully preserved. Religion is necessary as a condition of heart and soul, fitting us to enjoy perfectly the many blessings with which God has graciously surrounded us. Besides, does not religion itself fill the whole heart? Moreover, is it not all love? Oh, how profoundly I pity those cold and unimpressible hearts which are never warmed nor gladdened with the divine enthusiasm of true religion! How many delightful sensations and certitudes there are of which they can form

no adequate idea! Yet it has sometimes occurred to me (and I do not know that this is any proof of great heresy on my part) that there may be in eternity another kind of happiness for those irreligious people, more calm and oblivious, but less ineffable than the joys vouchsafed to the highly ardent and sensitive souls who appear to have received a larger and richer endowment of the spirit of life and of love. But, on the other hand, how much more unworthy will they be if they misuse and throw away so many valuable treasures, if they lavish them with prodigal hand upon vile creatures who have only death and their own nothingness to give back in exchange! O my God, my God, have I not often and bitterly experienced that perfect disappointment which always comes from attaching one's self to aught else than Thee? Help me, then, to renounce all error and all evil, that I may be truly Thine, only and entirely and forever Thine! It is time! This inexpressible happiness, I humbly acknowledge it, has never failed me, whenever I have sought it in Thee, its only source.

"Alphonse has enlisted in the Royal Body-Guard, with almost all the youth of the nobility, and such of the commons as are favorable to the cause of good order throughout the provinces. He has already gone, greatly pleased with the privilege of entering the service; and I, too, am happy to know that he is well employed,—though in military life,—at least for a little while. He is more generally garrisoned at Beauvais, but is often on duty at the Tuileries. In two months he will come back to spend with us his six-months' furlough. Yet I do not think he will remain a great while in this service, notwithstanding his present ardor for the life of a soldier. He has too much imagination and activity of mind to endure military discipline in time of peace. My own

feelings, as well as those of his father and uncles, are gratified to see him giving such positive proofs—such proofs as almost every man is now ambitious to give—of devotion to the Bourbons. He will probably pass several years in this way; and meanwhile we will consider whether something else may not be better for him. The Prince de Poix, commanding his company, was, they say, very much pleased with his appearance and deportment. He was immediately appointed instructor in the riding-school; and there he is just in his element, for, after his books, there is nothing for which he now manifests so much fondness as for horses."

A long interruption is here apparent.

XCII.

"Easter, March 26, 1815.

"Ah, what a difference between this Easter and the Easter of last year! Our peace was only a dream."

XCIII.

"July 22, 1815.

"I was right in saying that our peace was only a dream. From the sleep of that dream how cruel has been the awakening! Another dream of misfortune has lasted three months; but now, as I trust, we are to be happy again. God grant that it may last this time! This rash and reprehensible return of Bonaparte has cost us much national honor, much blood, and much treasure. France is ruined. There are still a great many foreign troops about us, and we are apprehensive that the treaty may not be signed; and yet the conditions for France are most humiliating and cruel. Such is the unenviable position in which we now find ourselves!

"I will not mention again, in this place, all the events

of these eight months. They will be perspicuously written everywhere. I will only say that, on receipt of the first news of the arrival in France of Bonaparte from Elba, Alphonse returned to Paris, where both his duty and his heart called him; that, with much trouble and hardship, he accompanied the king as far as Bethune; that, being there disbanded and thanked by the king, he came back amid great personal peril; and that, some time afterward, he left here and went to Switzerland. But after the battle of Mount Saint Jean (Waterloo) our princes returned, and Alphonse then repaired to Paris immediately, where he still is, and where he is taking steps to obtain a position in the diplomatic service. Again we have many hopes.

"Yet what anxiety and anguish have we not passed through! It is enough to say that Mâcon was taken by storm in the middle of the night, and that I awoke at two o'clock in the morning, aroused by the frightful noise of the cannon, bomb-shells, and musketry, mingled with the most doleful cries in all the streets. For a time I feared that we ourselves were doomed to be lost. I got up with Césarine, the only one of my children with me at the time; and we knelt down together, and there made our humble supplications to God, to whom we most earnestly commended our souls. Then everything became a little more quiet. The Austrians had become the masters of the city, and they did not materially abuse nor misuse their victory. Only a few houses were pillaged; and they were entered only because they had been imprudently opened. By the great grace of God we were spared everything personally objectionable and unpleasant.

"Now let us see what I have been doing since the 17th of September. Cecilia was confined, nearly five weeks

ago, of still another little daughter, which she is now nursing, and which has been named Celenia. So far so good. Alphonse is still at Paris. In early wifehood we long to be mothers; but, alas, when we have children in times like these, we suffer in a thousand other fibres besides those with which God has especially provided us for the pangs of parturition."

XCIV.

Happiness smiles on her again. Under date of October 16, 1816, we read the details of a negotiation of marriage between her second daughter, Eugenia, and Monsieur Coppens, of Hondschoote, a young and brilliant lieutenant-colonel of the Legion in garrison at Mâcon, and son of the ancient Lord of the city of Hondschoote, in Flanders. A mutual inclination rapidly hastened the end of these negotiations. The marriage took place at Mâcon on the very day of the dedication there of a new church. The maternal joy is too great for her to conceal it. She thus describes the ceremony:

"It was decided that they should be married in the new church; it was quite near us. So, immediately after the consecration of the edifice, which had attracted together a great concourse of people, we ourselves went there also. All my children were near me. Cecilia and Alphonse had arrived shortly before, and my little granddaughter Alice was there likewise. The weather was splendid. All the officers of the Legion were present, with their military band, which played several selected and suitable pieces. Eugenia was dressed charmingly. She wore a dress of embroidered tulle, over a skirt of white satin, trimmed with lilies and white roses. She carried a bouquet to match, and wore a beautiful veil of snow-white lace. She really looked very beautiful. Her

husband, who has a noble figure, and whose bearing was most manly, was radiant with happiness. Our street, as well as the church and all around it, was full of people, so that I was considerably annoyed with fear lest somebody should be hurt. We exercised all possible prudence to avoid accidents.

"I had invited nearly the whole city to spend the evening with us, and had imposed on myself much labor and care in preparing the house for the reception of so many guests. The dining-room, which is very large, was arranged for dancing. It was carpeted with green cloth, and was brilliantly lighted. The Colonel had sent us his regimental band, which we stationed in an adjoining room, where it produced a very fine effect. Many, who did not dance, played cards in the parlor. In my bedchamber, which is a very large room, and from which I removed the bed, I placed one long table capable of seating about thirty persons, and two shorter ones, which accommodated together as many more. There was also a table for the gentlemen in the large closet adjoining my room. On account of having the meats and everything else prepared and cooked in the best possible manner, supper was not served until midnight. I had given myself a great deal of concern about this festive entertainment, and had succeeded. Of all the things we had, few could have been better. Everybody good-naturedly, and with good sense, left early. I myself felt very much agitated, and was certainly not the only one to feel so. Finally we established the newly-married couple in their apartment, and I too retired, after fervently commending them to God. The next day I attended divine service, and heard a very good discourse, by an eloquent preacher, on the building and opening of the new church."

XCV.

"June 19, 1817.

"Alphonse is again traveling. Just now he is in Savoy, in the family of a Mr. Maistre, of whom a distinguished nephew, Monsieur Louis de Vignet by name, is there his most intimate friend. This young man has a superior mind, and much talent as yet undeveloped. In this respect he is, I think, not unlike Alphonse. Nor is he unlike him in his melancholy disposition. His face reminds me of Goethe's Werther, as I used to imagine that son of sorrow in my youth. Like the heads of his family, he is very religious; and on this account, principally, his friendship for my son pleases me greatly. Alphonse has uncommon need of examples of positive faith; for his religion is too free and too vague, seeming to me to be more of a mere sentiment than a matter of sincere belief.

"From Savoy he will go to Paris. He is all the while soliciting a diplomatic appointment, but thus far in vain. My own suggestions, and the example of my eldest brother, have turned his ideas in this direction; but we ourselves cannot open for him the doors of diplomacy; and our name, though honorable, is not sufficiently distinguished to attract the attention of the Ministry. He is becoming impatient and weary at having to remain so long without active employment; and his disappointments fall back on me and make me miserable."

XCVI.

"June 20, 1817.

"I have just received a proposition for the hand, in marriage, of my third daughter, Césarine. The young man pleases her; and he pleases me also, in most respects.

He is descended from a well-known and highly-respectable family in Paris, and his father was distantly related to my mother. Césarine is a dazzling beauty, quite after the Italian type, and is said to resemble, feature for feature, one of Raphael's famous faces, known as the Fornarina. She is, besides, very much and very justly beloved for her wit, her goodness, her simplicity, and her frankness. Suzanne, my fourth daughter, promises to be still more beautiful; but she is of an entirely different style. She is a perfect statue of maidenly innocence and candor. Sophie, less fascinating in her features, is nevertheless in possession of many great qualities of soul, which are far above any mere physical attractions; or, to say the least, these qualities of the heart fully compensate for all apparent deficiencies in personal beauty. What priceless treasures I have in my children! It seems as if Providence and nature had most harmoniously co-operated together in endowing me with their choicest gifts! As the mother of these children, what a strict account I shall have to render to God!"

XCVII.

"June 22, 1818.

"I am much opposed and blamed because I encourage the suit of the young gentleman who wishes to marry my beautiful Césarine. I am favorably disposed toward him because of his excellent character and capacity, and also because I believe their marriage would make them both happy for life. But (only through absurd and miserable considerations of society) my husband's family object to the match. It is true that these two young people have not much money; but we could conveniently accommodate them in our own home. I am obliged to conceal from my husband's family my real disposition to favor the match; but if I did not occasionally act somewhat con-

trary to their ideas and advice, I fear I should never succeed in bringing about any marriages at all for my poor daughters. However, it operates in no small degree against my conscience; and it may be that I am doing wrong to these young hearts, in permitting them even to hope that they may be eventually united. I have consulted one of my most confidential friends about it, and he approves of my course. O God, Thou knowest my intentions are good; let them succeed!

"The young gentleman is more in love than ever, and comes as often as he can without exciting the frowns of the opposing members of the family. When he comes too often, I myself receive him rather coldly; but he is very discreet. He is also a man of unimpeachable veracity and virtue. What at last is to be the result of his affectionate attentions to my daughter? It is a real torment to have in one family two opinions based on considerations so serious! In marriage, one of the most important acts of this life, I do not think the heart is sufficiently consulted by French society. Happily for myself, my parents listened to the voice of my own heart; and to that kindly condescension and complaisance on their part I owe the joys of my wedded life and my fine family of children."

XCVIII.

"July 18, 1818.

"The Savoyan friend of my son, Monsieur Vignet, who has been staying with us for some time, has just been suddenly and unexpectedly called to Paris, to see there the Sardinian Embassador, the Marquis Alfieri, with whom Alphonse is also well acquainted. It is, I think, a very good omen for the diplomatic fortune of this young gentleman, who, like my son, was beginning to be greatly discouraged. Ah, how very much I should now like to

see Alphonse also entering upon some active and useful career worthy of him!

"My health has been slightly declining for some time past. This, I think, is on account of my troubles of heart and mind for my daughters and my son. It is a matter which ought to cause me serious reflections. I am now almost fifty-two years of age; and, as I have never been very strong, I may rationally expect to grow old faster than those who are favored with uninterruptedly healthy and vigorous constitutions. A knowledge of this fact ought to revive and strengthen my piety, and make me turn my thoughts entirely toward God. Yet my soul itself seems to share the weakness of my body; and I no longer feel those lively and devout sentiments which used to penetrate my entire existence, elevating and purifying my heart, and making me so happy under any and all circumstances. I am now cold, dull, worldly-minded, groveling in my thoughts. How true it is that we should never wait for advanced age as the most proper period of life in which to work for the salvation of our souls! O my God, help me to conform my ways to Thy will; and grant that while the remainder of my days may be marked by a larger measure of obedience to Thee, I may also learn, even in this the eleventh hour of my career, to perform more fully and perfectly my duties to my fellow-creatures!"

XCIX.

"July 25, 1818.

"We have come to Montculot for a few days, and are here in the house of my good brother-in-law, the Abbot of Lamartine, who is now ailing and weak in mind, but not in heart. He almost overwhelms my daughters with presents. When he shall have passed away, Alphonse is

to inherit his estate. It is true that the mortgages and other incumbrances amount to about two hundred thousand francs, but the property may, nevertheless, be a great help to him in marrying."

C.

Fountain of Fayard, in Montculot Park, August 4, 1818. It is this truly Arcadian fountain which I celebrated, at a later day, in my "Harmonies," under the following title:

THE SPRING IN THE WOODS.

Thy murmuring waters are cool and clear
As they bubble up through the riven rock,
Silver fountain! How the tender grass lies low
And green under the shower of thy limpid spray!

The sculptured marble of Carrara,
Whose borders once thy little waves did wash,
No longer stays thy gentle even flow,
Which moistens now the carpet of the woods.

Thy dolphin darkly clad in green,
And proudly patient in thy solitude,
No longer pours thy foaming waters out
To catch upon their waves the sun's bright ray.

These old beech-trees, sylvan giants of glum visage,
Bend with cold and solemn grandeur over thee,
Mingling oft their plaintive sighs with the low
Sad rippling of thy melancholy tide.

These form a shaded temple for thy grief;
And the broken marble of thy basin,
Crowned with the green moss of many a year,
And the withered leaves of Autumn falling
With mournful cadence on thy ruffled breast,
Are an altar and a dirge fit for thee.

Little fountain, free and fair! Thy crystal rill
Ever gurgling forth to quench the thirst,
Or cool the fevered brow, wearies never;
Like noble hearts unrecognized in life,
Yet shedding still their genial smiles around,
And sympathizing always with the poor.

Bending over thy basin's broken border,
How with pensive gaze I watch thy waters
Gliding, like a silvery serpent, among
The pebbles smoothly worn by their soft touch;
Or trickling down the side of yon dull rock,
Like dew upon the monumental stone.

While listening to thy sad lamenting voice,
Methinks the old familiar forms I see,
Whose presence once did mingle with my joys;
Alas, 'tis but a dream! they are not here!

Nor can those forms ever again in life appear,
Being now only empty visions of the past! Wherefore
I'll sit awhile with thee, my old true friend,
And join my grief with thine, a consolation
We may feel, though sad, remembering thus
Together the scenes of youthful pleasure,
Mourning meanwhile over happier days gone by!

Bright fountain! whose gentle murmur now I hear,
How often in my growing years, when full
Of joy or childish cares, have I not sought
Thy margin cool, either to laugh or weep!

And canst thou tell how often, in the past,
These woods have heard thy mingled voice and mine?
Which one of my pains or my sorrowful thoughts
Has not floated away on thy rippling wave?

O yes! 'tis I, the same whom thou sawest,
Some years agone, with long locks streaming in the
Wind, plague thy repose, and play with thy light
Bubbles, fit for the sport of infant hands.

I it is, who, oft reclining beneath the
Shady arch these trees do form above thee,

Saw in dreams more numerous than thy drops,
Visions of rare beauty flit before me.

Glorious then was my bright horizon,
Filled with the treacherous rays of hope;
So in the morning the cloud is gilded,
Which darkens the path of the noonday sun.

Later in life, driven by the raging storm
Within my breast, grieving over some friend deceased,
How often have I laid my reeling head
Upon this cold rock whence thou springest forth!

Many a time and oft my moistened eyes
Have tried to look serenely upon thy surface calm;
Yet could not; for the bitter tears would trickle
Through the hands that tried to wipe them, and fall
Like spattering drops upon a mirror.

Then thou wert mine only friend, and thee only
Did my heart trust with its deep secrets;
For thy gurgling then, dear fountain, seemed
The sympathizing echo of my sobs.

And now, led hither by that instinct strong
Which bids us all seek where before we've found,
I come once more a listener to the noise
Of thy soothing waters in this shady grove.

But my fleeting thoughts pursue not very far
The tortuous course of thy wandering rill;
Unlike these scattered leaves when borne upon
Thy waves to where the rapid rivers roar.

From a world where my thoughts never find rest,
They quick return to the sound of thy voice,
To meditate in the depths of the woods,
Beneath the silent rays of the silvery orb.

Forgetful of the mighty deep, where thy course
Will lead thee to be swallowed up at last,
I love to mount still higher, from vein to vein
Of earth, even to thy odd and airy birthplace.

Methinks I see thee, daughter of the clouds,
Now in vapory billows over the brow
Of yon high mountain, placidly floating,
And now pouring down in tempest most terrible;
Or, now again, rising in gentlest mist
From the full cups of flowers all smiling.

The thirsty rock devours thee in the great
Gorge dug by thy rushing waters, where too
The grass through every pore drinks in thy
Crystal drops. Hiding from the curious
Eye, in earth's dark caverns, thou filterest
Till thy virgin pearls are pure and clear as
The sunlit azure of the vaulted sky.

Thou appearest! and lo, the desert teems
With life. A breath rises from thy waters,
And the old oak spreads again his lofty
Top, to shade thee with his waving branches.

The light of dawn floats from leaf to leaf, whilst
The joyous birds sing along the pathway;
And man, kneeling beside thy stream, drinks from
A golden cup, or from the hollow of his hand.

And whilst the leaves in heaps do gather,
Faithful still to Him who did command thee,
"Flow ever here, the weary one to bless,"
Thy murmuring voice reveals thy healing presence.

My ears intent can almost hear thee say,
"Here behold the handiwork of thy Creator!
This prodigy, which angels wondering see,
Is but the smallest token of His love."

Thy sweet solitude and thy murmurings soft
Seem to fit me for a true home eternal;
And the sacred sentiment I feel for Nature
Is my first hymn to her Author.

Echoing to every sound that comes from the grove
I hear, within the chambers of my heart,

Mysterious voices, whose tones resound
Like the muffled chant of an angelic choir.

As thy pure waters, within thy basin swelling,
Often overflow thy borders, little fountain,
So my poor heart, swollen with emotion,
Through my lips its burden now discharges.

A prayer bubbling up from my heart
Escapes in rapid accents, and I say,
"O Thou! whom I on bended knees adore,
Receive the humble incense of my tears."

Thus again, thou seest me beside thee,
To-day so little like the days of yore;
The swan doth change his plumage in Spring,
And the falling leaves proclaim Winter's approach.

Perhaps thou wilt see me again, ere long,
Bending above thee with whitened locks,
Or breaking a bough from the old beech-tree,
To steady the tottering steps of age.

Then I may sit upon thy moss-covered bank,
To pass there the remnant of my rickety days.
So situated, and instructed by thy gentle flow,
Thy waves may yet teach me how to die.

Seeing thy waters purling forth in fair volume,
And watching thy ripples coursing slowly away,
I will say to myself, "Behold there the route
Where my fast-gliding days will soon follow."

How many moons remain still to my lot?
It matters not! I go where thou goest!
The evening for us both now touches the dawn;
Flow on, gentle current! forever flow on!

I perceive that my mother, with a holier inspiration, had preceded me in meditations at this very fountain.

"August 4, 1818.

"It is one o'clock, and I have come to take a walk by the fountain of Fayard, a charming spot, fresh and shady, and close to the castle. I love to reflect and pray here, for one exercise, almost always, follows the other. I have here thanked God for all the blessings He has granted me during my residence in this neighborhood. These blessings are both great and numerous, and I have recounted them time and again. I am less frivolous than I was at the time of my arrival here; and I have found again some of my better emotions of other days. I feel that more retirement and solitude would revive my piety, and consequently increase my happiness. But I am now about to leave this place, and to take up again the broken threads of business, acquaintanceships, all my regular duties, real and imaginary, and all my doubts and troubles. O Lord of Heaven, have mercy on me! I tremble when I think of all the cares and griefs probably yet in store for me on account of Alphonse and Césarine, and of my friend, Madame Paradis, who in her present unfortunate situation has great need of me; and then I have great concern also on account of numerous other things. O my God, impart to me all requisite prudence and courage!

"As I walked this morning I thought with much pleasure of the many times I had been there before. I had good reasons for remembering six times especially. My journal seems to be more useful to me than any one else, because I have a very poor memory. Yet I always find a peculiar pleasure in thinking over what has happened to me in the various positions in which I have been placed. Moreover, I find that these reminiscences and reflections may be called into the expiatory service of chastening my soul.

"We are now reading Homer's 'Odyssey,' and some

of the sermons of Massillon; and my children are reading Roman and other ancient history. These younger readers have, as usual, behaved very well of late; and, all things considered, they are now the most charming members of the family. But the question arises, Have I been rearing and educating them rightly? Do I not owe myself a series of severe reproaches? This thought comes to me when I think of my embarrassments on account of Césarine. O Lord, my God, Thou art my only Hope, my only Helper! Leave me not alone, assist me to overcome my faults, and have mercy on me and on all the members of my household."

CI.

"August 15, 1818.

"Without doubt the many sufferings which I experience on account of my children will shorten my life. Sometimes I feel myself sinking under the weight of these woes. I suffer each one of their own troubles respectively more than they do themselves. The continued idleness of Alphonse worries me exceedingly. Was he born only for that? I found him again at Milly alone, where he had remained, calm but sorrowful,—more than ever living in his books, and sometimes writing verses, which he never shows. From time to time his friends, Monsieur Vignet and Monsieur Virieu, speak to me about him with evident enthusiasm; but what good do his talents do him, granting that they are real, so long as they remain buried? Besides, what sort of a thing is this echoless and suppressed poetry for a young man now almost devoured by the necessity of active life?

"One reason why I rejoiced so heartily at the return of the Bourbons was, that I hoped and supposed my family would no longer oppose Alphonse's disposition to do

something; and that these princes, whom we have faithfully served, would employ my son in a position he is capable of filling; but for the last three years they have not taken any notice of us whatever. Yet I can well conceive how it is. The princes and their ministers are overwhelmed with solicitations, and have no occasion to search so far away in the provinces to discover the youthful possessors of unknown talents. For a time, at least, we must simply resign ourselves to forgetfulness. What does this wretched world amount to after all? Is it worth even a regret? All this I may say to myself, but not to my son; for there is a period in life in which illusions are as necessary to youth as realities are to advanced age. It really seems as if Alphonse were bowed down by some secret grief, which he does not speak of, but of which my fears occasionally give me a glimpse. It is not natural for a young man of his imagination and age to shut himself up in such absolute solitude. It must be that he has lost, by death or otherwise, something of either present or prospective value, which occasions his profound melancholy."

CII.

"September 12, 1818.

"Yesterday Alphonse received a package of letters from his most intimate friend, Monsieur Virieu, calling him in the utmost haste to Paris. He has sold his horse in order to obtain the necessary money, one hundred and twelve dollars; and I have given him, besides, all my savings during the summer. So now he has gone. Monsieur Virieu, who is in the diplomatic service, and who is almost as much interested in Alphonse as in his own welfare, told him in his letters that Count Lagarde, the French Embassador to Spain, had decided to take him, as

his secretary, to Madrid. God grant that all his rightful plans and purposes may succeed at last! . . .

"Strangely and grievously enough, everything has fallen through. Alphonse has returned, more discouraged than ever, and with increased bitterness against the circumstances which force him to remain here in idleness. Monsieur Lagarde, who was acquainted with him, and who really wanted him, was obliged to start suddenly for Madrid without him. Oh, why can I not obtain for him that cheerful resignation which I myself draw from constant prayers and from humble submission to the will of God?

"My project of a marriage for my dear Césarine is now also absolutely impossible. This fact I have been obliged to announce, not without tears, to the poor young man, who sincerely loved her. The family on my husband's side are obstinate and unyielding in their refusal, and I am in despair. The young man persists in hoping against hope. Césarine, though exceedingly sorrowful, is yet quite dutiful and touching in her submission. She fears that if she should act contrary to the prejudices of the family, however ill founded those prejudices may be, the displeasure of those on whom we so largely depend might fall on me. This is the considerate and filial view which she takes of the matter. What a pity (if not a wrong) to crush in this way two pure young hearts, who have such a perfectly natural and wholly innocent inclination for each other! Happily, in my daughter's case, this inclination was not a passion, but only a simple disposition to love, and a feeling of gratitude for being herself so dearly loved. Conventional and cruel as may be the sentence, they must not see each other again.

"Another marriage is now talked of for Césarine, to a gentleman of great merit, who has already asked her hand.

I have spoken to her about it; and she seems to fall into the idea even more readily than I. She is so charmingly considerate and obedient! Yet I am unable to determine fully in my own mind whether it is through an almost perfect spirit of devotion to her family, or more on her own account, that she favors this suit. I require a little more time to study her in this regard. Alphonse has very manfully told her not to do violence to the sentiments which she may feel for another, and that he will, if necessary, support her in opposition to the whole family, until she shall be free to follow her supremest inclinations. She replied that she had no other feelings than those of gratitude for the kindly sentiments she had inspired, and that she would follow, without lasting sorrow, the wishes of the family, and marry the worthy gentleman whom they were choosing for her. The dear child appears to be as reasonable as she is lovely. What a happy husband he ought to be for whom Providence destines such a rare treasure!"

A few months later, that is to say, in February, 1819, the obedience of the beautiful Césarine had led to her happiness,—at least, to a sort of conventional and convenient happiness.

CIII.

"Sunday, February 21, 1819.

"We arrived at Chambéry on Monday the 17th instant, at nine o'clock in the evening. The roads were in very bad condition, and the days were hardly long enough for the great distances we had to travel. Several members of the family were expecting us with impatience, and gave us a most hearty welcome. Césarine appears to please the people about here, being well suited to the dispositions and ways of the inhabitants of this part of the country, who are good and simple and very amiable.

They overwhelm us with kind attentions, I might almost say with friendship.

"I have occasion to congratulate myself more and more every day on account of this marriage, for which, on all sides, I had much trouble to arrange matters satisfactorily, and to which I myself sometimes felt extreme indifference, if not reluctance. This district was but little known to us. Monsieur Vignet's face is not prepossessing, and his property is small. It was I who had to do everything, and I sometimes hesitated and trembled, lest I should do wrong. I prayed God with confidence to enlighten me; and I then saw that, prospectively, everything really good and reasonable was likely to be eventually attained in this marriage. I perceived that Césarine was far from cherishing any dislike for the personal appearance of Monsieur Vignet, and felt sure that she would soon learn to love him. I have had the great satisfaction since of seeing that I had by no means deceived myself. She loves him very much, and he idolizes her.

"Monsieur Vignet enjoys a most distinguished and enviable reputation. He is full of intelligence and knowledge, and is possessed of almost every manly merit. His family is one of the very best in this section of the country, and he bids fair to attain, through his own force of qualification and character, and through the support of his uncle, Count Maistre, who is now the Chancellor of Savoy, the most eminent position possible in the professional career he has embraced. He has a sister, good and amiable, who lives with him, and a brother, an old friend of Alphonse, and who was the first cause of this marriage.

"I am therefore happy, a thousand times happy, because of having found this honorable issue out of all the bewildering mistakes which my weakness led me to com-

mit, and on account of which I have so bitterly and justly reproached myself. For a long time my joy was much clouded by this trouble. I could scarcely bring myself up to the task of renouncing the poor young man whose hopes I had too much flattered; and I was really very much distressed at the sorrow I caused him; but when I no longer saw any hope, because of the unyielding opposition of my husband's family, I was, for my daughter's sake, obliged to break up the courtship as soon as possible. God graciously came to my aid, as He always does in my troubles, and I render Him thanks a thousand times for all His goodness toward me. The nuptial ceremonies of my Césarine and Monsieur Vignet were brilliant, both at Mâcon and at Chambéry."

CIV.

"SAINT-AMOUR, IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DOUBS,
"Tuesday, March 9, 1819.

"I left Chambéry on Thursday, the 4th instant, and arrived here before night on Saturday, the 6th, having followed my projected route across Mount Chat in coming. I had sent forward, it is true, a relay of fresh horses to Yenne; and on Thursday we made a very long day's journey. It is not enough to say that the roads were very bad; they were frightful and perilous. The mountain is very high and very steep. Monsieur Costa, who has his residence at the foot of the mountain, hired us two horses to assist us in the ascent; but, notwithstanding that assistance, I was often obliged to dismount and walk around the more difficult turns, where the carriage itself had to be carried, and where I was very much afraid, looking down the enormous depths and appalling precipices, and seeing at the bottom the lake Bourget, wherein we would have been buried had we fallen. The descent is more easy,

but the danger commences again at Yenne, the road being a sort of narrow cornice without border, having on one side huge and threatening rocks, and on the other, at a depth of at least three or four hundred feet, the swift and narrow current of the Rhone.

"On the other side of the Rhone there are still enormous rocks, and the State Prison known as Pierre Chatre. There are some very picturesque views; among others a deep and narrow defile between two prodigious peaks, where one can scarcely get a glimpse of the sky. The pass is rather long, and it seemed to me all the while that one or the other of the immense masses on either hand, above, was about to fall and bury me beneath its ruins. It is there that we may feel in all its force the littleness of man, his utter dependence on God, and his need to be always prepared to enter His presence.

"There it is that we are astonished at our own recklessness and temerity, and the great dangers to which we strangely accustom ourselves. We are apt to be more struck by these thoughts here than elsewhere, because the wonderfulness and grandeur of the scenery are more out of our ordinary experience. But, in reality, is there not danger to us everywhere and in everything? Are we not always completely under that Divine Hand which, at any moment, can crush us to the earth like miserable insects? And still we dare to rebel in our thoughts! to think ourselves independent! and to be proud! What madness! It is thus that Nature, by her mighty frowning aspect, impresses us somewhat with a realizing sense of our own nothingness!

"At last, after so many excitements, I have come to rest myself, with my daughter Cecilia (de Cessia), at Saint-Amour. She is very happy here, is almost adored for the goodness of her character, and is surrounded by her charm-

ing family of children, of which each and every year seems to be impatient to increase the number. Here, at last, I have had the opportunity of giving myself up quietly to my reflections. It was a poignant grief to me to separate myself from my Césarine; and she also, though happy with her husband, was yet sad enough to see me leave. Indeed, I was greatly troubled; I felt peculiarly comfortless; but reflection reassures me. Still, it seems that we can never know positively, in this world, whether, in certain cases, we have done right or wrong. God has willed it so, in order to keep us in proper humility and distrust of ourselves. I humbly commend to Him that dear child, whom I myself have left, surrounded, however, by an excellent family, full of all the cardinal virtues, and more especially the virtue of piety.

"They all seem disposed to love her very much. Her husband deserves and enjoys the greatest consideration. She loves him sincerely, although he is much older than she, and he has for her the warmest regard and attachment. She will be in the very best society of her husband's section of the country, and many of the families there are both cultured and distinguished. Her income arising from her husband's position and business is now quite sufficient, and the value of their landed property, though small at present, will increase with time. There is very little real luxury at Chambéry, most of the fortunes there being fairly and healthfully limited. Therefore I have every reason to be satisfied, believing that all is well.

"It is now my Suzanne who chiefly engrosses my thoughts. She is a beauty of another order, but which is said to be matchless of its kind, and which excited the admiration and enthusiasm of much of the society of Chambéry, and of many of the young gentlemen of Pied-

mont, where I had taken her in company with her sister on her wedding tour. On beholding her beautiful face and form for the first time, many persons really made exclamations of delight; but she is so guileless as not even to suspect the existence of her own visible perfections. My husband's family are already beginning to talk to me about a suitable match for Suzanne. Ah, if I could only soon see her well married, like my three elder daughters, and not so far away from me! And now, if Alphonse also would only marry, and marry prudently! Instead of a career which seems ever closed to him, I would at least, in this way, give him happiness."

CV.

"MACON, March 18, 1819.

"I am back here once more, but not in peace, as I should like to be. On coming again into France I find that the different political parties are terribly excited against each other. Both my husband and myself are reproached bitterly, and sometimes sharply, for our moderation. It is supposed that we ought to participate in the discussions and angry feelings of the Royalist party, to which we belong; but such conduct on our part would not accord with our sense of decorum and duty. Estranged allies are not won back to their party by insulting them. My husband and myself have been obliged to withdraw from the society of many of our most respected friends, and to a great extent to shut ourselves up within ourselves. We are happy in the consciousness of being honestly and faithfully attached to the Bourbons, without losing, on their account, our self-possession, our judgment, or our souls. Are there not in all of us personal passions enough to combat, without kindling those unfortunate political animosities which are now so greatly inflaming the

minds of men? My husband says he shed his blood freely for the Bourbons on the 10th of August, and is ready to shed it again, but that he will not yield his own convictions of right action to the senseless rage of their partisans. He remains silent; he suffers. It is in this way, he says, that civil wars are bred. The enemies of the Bourbons seem to be no less irrational and unjust. Between these two parties we are in a manner objects of suspicion alike to both, and are almost totally proscribed and crushed. O Lord, shed abroad over all the land the spirit of peace and justice! I find that Alphonse has again gone to Paris. What, I wonder, is he going to do there now?"

CVI.

"June 11, 1819.

"To-day I saw Madame Bianco, of Italy. She is the most beautiful and attractive lady I have ever seen. There is a radiance about her face which is indescribably sweet, and at the same time lively, and which attracts the heart quite as much as it dazzles the eye. The tone of her voice, with its foreign accent, produces an emotion and a sort of sentimentality and tenderness which are peculiarly enchanting. She brought me news from Alphonse, of whom she saw much at Paris, and recited some of his verses, which I did not recognize. They are religious and melancholy stanzas, in which is also discovered a great depth of passion."

CVII.

"MILLY, September 4, 1819.

"Here again is Alphonse. His health is good; but just now I have other anxieties on his account. At Chambéry he has made the acquaintance of a young English lady, a Miss Birch, whom he is extremely wishful to marry. It

would seem that he has already succeeded in pleasing the young lady herself, and that they have mutually engaged themselves,—as much so, at least, as any two persons can who are still dependent on the will of their parents. How strange are the ways of Providence in sometimes sporting with our thoughts! I was murmuring and despairing at seeing my son without occupation, and apparently without aim, wandering from one place to another, using up his time and vigor in useless vanities and in unhealthy day-dreams, when, lo, this same Providence presents to us suddenly, as it were, by His own hand, a foreign lady, who is highly accomplished, and who is able and anxious to control for good the heart of Alphonse, to aid him in the first important steps of an honorable career in life, and to make him happy! As for any happiness pertaining to myself individually, I do not speak of it, for, for a long time, it has been almost entirely bound up in that of my son and my daughters.

"Here is substantially what they write to me, from Chambéry, about Miss Marianne Birch, the young English lady, with whom Césarine is well acquainted. Without being a beauty (which is a gift often more dangerous than useful to its possessor), she is agreeable and graceful, with a fine figure and magnificent hair. She is naturally endowed with a superior mind, is remarkably well educated, and is distinguished for her rare accomplishments. She belongs to a very good family in England, and her connections are all that one could reasonably wish or expect. Her mother, who is a widow, without being rich, is in easy circumstances. She is an only daughter. Her father was a colonel of militia in England during the serious and exciting threats of invasion by Bonaparte. The French exiles were cordially received at their house in London; and they gave

especial welcome to a persecuted lady of high rank, the Marchioness of La Pierre, who had been banished from Savoy, and who was pointed out to me at a reception given by the Governor of Savoy, when I was there at the time of the marriage of Césarine.

"This lady of rank must, at one time, have been exceedingly beautiful. She passed in England the whole period of the exile of the King of Sardinia, up to 1818. She has several daughters, who were born, or brought up, in London; and these fair flowers of nobility have, ever since their childhood, lived like sisters with Miss Birch, their friend, who is now Alphonse's sweetheart. Returning to Savoy, they invited her to come with them, to partake in turn of their own hospitality. They were naturally proud to show her their picturesque country, their castle, and the high esteem in which they are held in their province and on their large estates, which, in great part, have been restored to them.

"They are now all living together, in a beautiful country-seat with a large garden, at the extremity of one of the suburbs, only a few minutes' walk from Chambéry. Their castle is the place of meeting for all the literary and distinguished society of this pretty city; and there they spend their time in drawing and painting, with occasional diversions in music and horseback-riding. It is little else than an English country-seat transported to Savoy.

"Césarine sometimes visits the distinguished and happy inmates of this castle; and her brother-in-law, Louis de Vignet, Alphonse's friend, goes there very often. He himself writes poetry, and, now and then, reads it to the young ladies. He has also read to them some of Alphonse's verses, which seemed to please them all. They have questioned him about his friend Al-

phonse, upon whom he has passed an exaggerated encomium, comparing him to a young yet famous English poet, whose name I do not now remember, but who writes fantastic and mysterious poetry, much read and talked about just at this time. He promised the young ladies to bring his friend to see them when he should come to Chambéry, on his return from Switzerland, where he then was, living alone in a fisherman's cabin on the borders of Lake Zurich.

"It happened as follows. Alphonse, preceded by his much exaggerated renown, returned to Bissy, the country-seat of Colonel de Maistre, near Chambéry. From there he came to Servolex, and then to Chambéry, the house of his sister Césarine. It was much like the accidental meeting in a romance. They were all curious to know the brother of the beautiful Césarine. His personal appearance seemed to sustain fully the poetic sentiments which had already captivated their imagination.

"The young English lady did not conceal her high appreciation of the melancholy verses of the young Frenchman; and her mother, who does everything her daughter wishes, looked on her smilingly and approvingly when she gave expression to her judgment. In the course of a few weeks Alphonse became the favorite of the household. He persuaded Césarine to speak to Madame La Pierre, who spoke to the mother of the young lady. But the difficulty which makes me tremble will come from our own side, and especially from my sisters-in-law. The young lady herself is a Protestant. But Césarine reassures and consoles me. She is most anxious, indeed, to see her brother married, and tells me that the friend of the Misses La Pierre, who are themselves very pious, has manifested, through their mutual intimacy in England, a predilection for their own re-

ligion, and that she would probably have already become a Catholic were it not for the fear of afflicting her mother. If she would solemnly promise Césarine to be of our religion, and to educate her children in our faith, I think it would at once remove all difficulties on our side.

"How many troubles I shall have to contend with before it will be possible for me to overcome all these obstacles, and harmonize in the family so many opposing wishes! What is more distasteful to a coterie of uncles and aunts, so severely moral and so coldly rational, than a romantic marriage with a foreigner? I scarcely dare speak of it to my husband and his brothers; and, yet, without their consent the marriage will never take place. The entire fortune of the family is in their hands. Alphonse has nothing but the small annuity provided for him by his father, and fifty thousand francs in reversion, after us, from Saint Point. All the large estates of my father-in-law belong to my brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law. If they will not settle a portion of the property on Alphonse in a marriage-contract, how can we fairly present the young man, without career and without fortune, to a family richer than ourselves? With young people, love compensates for all things else; but it is not the young people who coldly formulate and deliberately execute the marriage-articles relating to property. At present, my brain and my eyes are alike unable to find the sleep they need."

CVIII.

"November 9, 1819.

"Everything is broken off. Alphonse has returned to Milly, and the mother of the young English lady has taken her away to Turin to separate her from him whom she seems to love. Nevertheless, the young people write

to each other occasionally. I feel very sad. My husband, tormented by our embarrassed circumstances in consequence of bad crops and the debts of his son, which must be paid previous to the celebration of any marriage whatever, so as not to deceive the family with which he would be united, talks of retiring altogether to the country, and of selling his house and other property at Mâcon. If things are coming to this pass, how shall I ever be able to marry off my two remaining daughters? Who will come to seek them, whether in the heart or in the outskirts of a poor village? Conversation with my husband on these subjects, and the fear of his selling our house, have caused me to shed many tears this evening. My two little girls, seeing me weep, without suspecting that it was in the least on their account, went out very quietly and shut themselves up in the cabinet of the Muses, next to my chamber. The wainscoting of this cabinet is constructed with appropriate niches, supporting the nine Muses carved in wood. Not seeing the children about, I entered the cabinet, and there surprised them, both on their knees, praying and weeping before God, that He might console me. Notwithstanding all my troubles, how truly happy I am to have such tender, affectionate, and pious daughters! Yet at times I feel as if it renders me only the more unfortunate not to be able to prepare for all my children a lot suitable to my longings and to their own merits!"

CIX.

"December 25, 1819.

"Alphonse left Milly, this morning, very sad and very anxious. The Baron de Mounier, who thinks a great deal of him, wrote him a letter, telling him to come immediately to Paris, as, at last, he had a fair prospect of getting him into the diplomatic service. The adminis-

tration has changed. Monsieur Pasquier is now the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Monsieur Mounier and Monsieur Rayneval, both of whom have a high opinion of my son, have, we trust, sufficient influence with Monsieur Pasquier to secure the appointment of Alphonse as a Secretary of Legation. Then he would at least be free to marry the lady he loves, and his career for the present would take the place of fortune. He has left us full of hope."

CX.

"January 6, 1820.

"Nothing new from Paris, except that they write me that Alphonse is received there with distinction in the best society, where, according to the expression of Madame de Vaux, my sister, both his person and his talents excite a sort of infatuation. She mentions the names of many good persons, whose mothers I knew in my youth, who overwhelmed him with attention. These are among the number: the Princess de Talmont, the Princess de Tremouille, Madame de Raigecourt, the friend of Madame Elizabeth, Madame de Saint Aulaire, the Duchess de Broglie, daughter of Madame de Staël, Madame de Montcalm, sister of the Duke de Richelieu, and Madame de Dolomieu, whom I knew so well at the house of the Duchess of Orleans. Besides, she says, many eminent and influential gentlemen have condescended to offer him their friendship; yes, to him, the young provincial, who, but yesterday, was so obscure. Among the gentlemen thus named are the young Duke de Rohan, the virtuous Mathieu de Montmorency, Monsieur Molé, Monsieur Lainé, who is said to be a great orator, Monsieur Villemain, the pupil of Monsieur de Fontane, whom he sees at the house of Monsieur Decazes. Nevertheless, he is known to all these great people only by a kind of quiet

rumor which sometimes precedes the merit and announces the fame of certain young men.

"Thou knowest, O Lord, that I am proud, very proud indeed, of all the unexpected and auspicious attentions which are now paid to my son; but Thou knowest likewise that I do not ask for him what the world calls glory and honor, but rather that Thou wilt make him an honest and useful man, and one of Thy humble servants, like his father. All the rest is vanity; often worse than vanity."

CXI.

Here the manuscript is interrupted by a journey of this poor mother to Paris. Her friends there write to her that her son is sick with inflammation of the lungs. She starts at an early hour of the night of the 12th of February, with her daughter Suzanne, who was then only sixteen years of age, and whose general appearance was more like that of a guardian angel than a daughter of man. We see in her rapid memorandum and sketches of travel that at Châlons-on-the-Saône she was thrown into consternation by meeting on the wharf an indecent masquerade, in which all the objects of her pious veneration, religion, royalty, and modesty, were grossly travestied and scoffed at. Her heart shrinks at the sight of this foul and ominous procession, and she suffers at once a presentiment of impending disaster. In passing along the road near Auxerre, a voice from a public carriage cries out the news of the assassination of the Duke de Berry. She arrives at Paris in the very midst of the emotion, confusion, and mourning. Happily, she finds her son convalescent. In his attic, he is surrounded by friends, who have given him the cares, the constant nursing, the tenderness, and the solicitous watchings by his pillow which at home he would have had from his own family. Her heart expands.

The first poems of her son have just appeared in a small volume. These poetic effusions have, in the course of a few days, caused his name to be recognized as of some account. No less a personage than Monsieur de Talleyrand, that disdainful and yet infallible critic and censor, has himself just sounded the signal for admiration. A friend of the happy mother brings to her a note, written the very day after the publication of her son's volume, in which the great diplomatist writes as follows to a princess who had lent him the volume: "I spent a part of last night in reading the book; and my long absence from sleep is an evidence of the interest it excited in me. I am not a prophet, and cannot tell what the public will think or feel; but my public, in this case, is my own impression under the curtains of my bed. The book is the work of a man; we will talk about it again."

Nor was this all. The friends of her son, confirmed in their good will by the applause of the whole public, both men and women, took advantage of the moment of enthusiasm to besiege with solicitations the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Monsieur Pasquier, himself a very literary man, appointed the young poet Secretary of Legation at Naples. Monsieur Siméon, Minister of the Interior, sent, in the name of His Majesty Louis XVIII., a collection of Lemaire's Latin classics, with the most flattering testimony of the satisfaction of this literary king. Further, of his own accord, and without solicitation, the king granted to the young Secretary a pension out of the funds for the encouragement of literature. This pension was designed to supply the insufficiency of the salary as Secretary of Legation. Life, fortune, ambition, glory, and especially universal friendship, all burst at once on this sensitive existence, so long ignored and retarded in its hopes, and so long left in disappointment and despair.

The mother's heart now overflows with happiness. The fame of her son, the universal admiration at Paris of the beauty of her daughter Suzanne, the real joys of the present, the bright prospects for the future, and the hope of a long-contemplated and desirable matrimonial union for her son,—a union henceforth rendered easy by the constancy of the young English lady herself, and by the dazzling effect of so much celebrity and honor on the eyes of her hesitating mother, give a veritable intoxication of pleasure to the pages of the journal during these three months. But these pages, covering the time mentioned, are of too deep and sacred a nature to be quoted. For the most part they constitute an inviolable secret between her heart and her God. Still, there is one of them which, in reading it over to-day, strikes us by a strange and prophetic coincidence of circumstances and sentiments between the destiny of the mother and that of her son.

On the evening of Easter, 1820, she writes that, suffocated as it were by her own and her children's happiness, she felt the need of going, at nightfall, to pour out her swelling heart in thanksgivings and pious tears in the church of Saint Roch, where she had prayed so often in her younger days. She takes with her her daughter Suzanne, and conceals herself in the shadow of a pillar to thank God for so many blessings bestowed upon her at once. The hymn which she writes in her journal, on returning from the church, is yet overflowing with the piety, the rejoicings and the tears, which, without doubt, she poured forth still more abundantly in that ecstasy of gratitude before God. All the sons of men should be able to read such lines, in order that they might see how much of anguish or of happiness they may occasion to the hearts of their mothers!

CXII.

On the 3d of July, 1820, she thus again opens her journal, after having been interrupted by weeks of travel, of care, of apprehension, and at last of sweet satisfaction.

"MACON, July 3, 1820.

"I have been so much and so anxiously occupied since the 31st of May, the last day I wrote in this journal, that I have not yet been able to note down, as it deserves, a most interesting and important event; an event, by the way, so much desired and so little expected,—the marriage of my son. It was celebrated on the 6th of June, in the chapel of the Governor of Chambéry. I returned from Chambéry on Friday, the 2d instant. My daughter-in-law passed in perfect retirement many of the days immediately preceding her marriage. The ceremony took place at eight o'clock in the morning, in presence of the Governor and his wife, the Governor's Aide-de-Camp, the Marchioness La Pierre and her daughters, all four of them, the Count de Maistre, Monsieur de Vignet, his sister, Mademoiselle Olympe, and the Bishop of Annecy. The Abbot of Etiola performed the ceremony. My daughter-in-law was dressed, with all possible propriety, in a very beautiful vesture of embroidered muslin, and a splendid lace veil, which almost entirely covered her. It is impossible for any countenance to have been more expressive of dignity, modesty, and grace, or of piety.

"I cannot tell all the happiness, and yet deep concern, which I felt in seeing my son come at last to this most important epoch of his life. In his behalf I prayed God with great fervency, but am continually reproaching myself for not having prayed enough yet. How many ardent

prayers of gratitude and of joy a mother, who realizes at last such a happy moment for her son, can at once hold in her heart! Her work upon the earth is finished on the day when she sees the happiness of all her children well secured. I have yet two more daughters whom I long to see at the foot of the altar in this touching ceremony. A marriage has already been proposed for my beautiful Suzanne. Happy, happy the man for whom God destines such an angel in human form!

"Alphonse, with his wife and mother-in-law, after the double ceremony (Catholic and Protestant) at Chambéry and at Geneva, has started for Italy. He is slowly on his way to his post of duty in Naples, under the Duke of Narbonne.

"I have brought back with me my poor Césarine, who is now very ill, in order to consult a physician for her at Lyons, on our way to Mâcon. God seems to be sending me new sorrows now, somewhat in proportion to my recent excess of happiness. I have also found again my poor friend Madame Paradis (who has been a sort of second sister to me) in the last extremities of disease. Alas, I had too much reason to expect the fatality of her illness. I have watched her, day and night, for two weeks. She could not rest except when I was with her. She expired in my arms! What a devoted friend I have lost in her! I have had the heartfelt satisfaction of inspiring her with a faith and resignation which she did not possess so fully as I at the beginning of our friendship. She died in the hope and, I think I may truly say, in the joy of the Lord. What an unfillable void this loss makes around me! She lived at Mâcon, just opposite our own windows; and upon the least sign of trouble or grief in my face she would always come immediately to share at least half of it. As an evidence of her unspeakable affection for me, she has

left me a considerable legacy. It was her desire and purpose to give me all her property, not having herself either brother or sister; but to this proposition on her part I would not consent. I promised, however, to accept of her little pleasure-ground, known as Saint Clement, just outside of the city limits of Mâcon.

"Without this incomparable friend, who used to divine my wants for my children, who sought out my sorrows in the very depths of my heart, who was fain to forget herself in her eagerness to assist me, and who very often sacrificed herself beyond her means, what would sometimes have become of me and mine? Oh, may our affection, which was so enduring on earth, become eternal in heaven! I will never pass an evening nor a morning without praying for her soul; and when I see, before my window, on the other side of the street, her own window always closed, or always occupied by other faces, how my heart would break if I did not hope and believe that I shall see her again in heaven!

"What do I not owe to my many good friends here below? I believe in my heart that true friendship is a visible form and attribute of Providence! When we are moved by a spirit of good will toward others, God himself seems to hear us, speak to us, understand us, and shelter us, more securely than ever, in the hearts of our own friends. By a rare privilege, I have had excellent friends in every period of my life. When they have been taken away from me, I cannot think that I have lost them entirely; they are so often present with me. I have a very dear and charming one just now in the person of the young and beautiful Madame Delahante. In spite of the difference in our respective ages, she has adopted me as a second mother; and I see in her another daughter."

CXIII.

"Sunday, July 16, 1820.

"Some unwise women of the village, who had heard that the newspapers were publishing rumors of the assassination of Alphonse, by highway-robbers, on the road between Rome and Florence, were cruel enough to come to me, in tears, to repeat the false news. It appears that the journals which contained this seemingly tragic adventure, of which I cannot conceive the origin, had been kept from me. Fortunately, however, I received from Alphonse himself, this morning, a letter of a later date than that ascribed to the reported calamity, and was thus reassured, so to speak, before being surprised or alarmed. Yet I was much moved by the mere rumor alone. What would have become of me if I had not received that letter? and how similar false reports, spread by faithless journalists, might cause the death of many mothers! I am anxiously waiting for another letter; for I cannot help fearing that there may have been some foundation for the rumor, and that Alphonse is trying to conceal from me all knowledge of the peril which he has escaped! Through his friend, Monsieur de Virieu, I have already learned that he was dreading to meet in Italy a certain rash and wicked man, who declares that he cannot and will not forgive him for his marriage. Can it be that? or something else? I know not. May God bless and protect him and his wife, even as I bless them, but as He alone is able to protect them!"

CXIV.

Having returned to her retreat at Milly, after so many emotional events, she here repines, in two or three notes of her journal, at the great void which she finds around

her in consequence of the marriage of her daughters and of her son. Then again she is saddened at the thought of her repining, since these absences are only the conditions of their own happiness. Her son gives her anxiety, because he found himself thrown (though unavoidably) into the midst of the revolution at Naples. The political agitations of France, under a system of violently antagonistic parties, each striving to snatch the power from the hands of the other, cause her to turn her thoughts upon matters of government. These passionate and perilous agitations make her regret the unity of power, and the silent discipline, of a patriarchal monarchy. We give here her own reflections, without presuming to criticise them. Alike in religion and in politics, a son may cherish the sentiments of his mother without blindly embracing her dogmas. The son, as he grows up to manhood, is not fed, like an infant, on milk from his mother's breast or from the nurse's bottle, but on bread and meat fit for full-grown men.

Still, it is impossible not to recognize the fact that a strong unity of power, whether it be lodged in the delegates of the people, according to the Republicans, or in a king, according to the Monarchists, seems to be more logical and more advantageous to society than the heated antagonisms of the mixed system which, at that time, was called the Constitutional System. We cannot well disguise from ourselves the fact that this sort of government keeps the various parties in a continual state of war, or of dissension and tumult bordering on war. Now, there can never be war without exciting general hatred in the heart, and mutual hatred always proves itself to be a fatal element in society. It is in thoughts akin to these that we find the foundation of the ideas of this holy woman. Hatred is opposed to love; God is love; therefore gov-

ernments which, in times of peace and without provocation, train and organize their citizens for war, are based on principles in conflict with the laws of God. To an instinct so straightforward and pious, only one answer can be made. It is this: Unhappily, mankind are so constituted that nations are obliged to choose between peace and liberty, and liberty is just as precious and divine as peace. Let us read:

"What a wretched sort of government it is under which we are now living, and which we are obliged to respect and obey, simply because it is the will of the king that it shall be so! It appears to operate in a manner altogether contrary to the peace and charity which ought always to prevail among Christians. People seem to be occupied almost exclusively in mutually and bitterly criticising each other, and in revealing everything bad that they can find out about each other. Great excesses are permitted under the pretext of considerations for the public good; the conscience is warped; the heart becomes really corrupt; and men, naturally inclined to evil, find plausible excuses for abandoning themselves, without restraint, to their own wicked inclinations. Friendly and unselfish social intercourse becomes wellnigh impracticable. People are all the while measuring their own forces, and plotting and rising against each other, every one keenly suspecting and fearing his neighbor. A false shame, a spirit of dissimulation, comes to mingle its poison in the already deadly cup. Men and women alike learn to speak one thing and think another. They lack the magnanimity to defend the absent who are unjustly accused, because they are themselves afraid of being treated like those who have already had the misfortune to become the victims of slander and persecution. Corruption and injustice are thus running wild throughout the land; and I who deeply,

very deeply, feel all this, even I, am being spoiled, and am becoming less loving and less gentle in my disposition. Yet it seems to me that it is only against the more wicked that I have become severe in my thoughts and words and conduct; but those whom I blame quickly justify themselves, as against others, by professions of belief in the same thoughts and conclusions which affect me!

"O God, give me back again my peace of mind, cause me to avoid everything which I ought to shun, and help me to separate myself as much as possible from the feverish uneasiness and consuming restlessness of the age which must be so odious in Thy sight! My political system depends, and must ever depend, on my religion. This teaches me to believe that the purely monarchical form of government is the best, because it is that of which Thou gavest the model to the world when Thou didst graciously undertake to govern Thy chosen people, the Israelites of old, and when, in the hardness of their hearts, they asked another than Thee for their king. A king given by Thee is absolutely Thine image; he must carefully preserve all his power and all his authority; the more he shares his divine prerogatives with his people, the more he excites their envy and their passions.

"After all, is not a well-administered monarchy only a large family, whose king is a father? and what father, who is wise, will allow each of his children to pass judgment on his conduct, and on the motives which influence him in his several purposes and operations? What prudent father would give his children the right to find fault with everything, to speak and write anything and everything, whether against his system of family government or against their own brethren, even though it should be under the mutually understood condition of their incur-

ring punishment if they spoke or judged wrongly? Would he not do infinitely better to anticipate and guard against the inevitable mistakes and wrong-doings of his children than to have to reprove and punish them after the fact, and thereby introduce unpleasant, if not fatal, misunderstandings and bickerings among them? Would such a father be truly a wise man? and would his conduct be in accordance with the laws of God and the rules of charity? This, however, with no less degree of general impropriety and incorrectness, is the true picture of a 'constitutional government,' such as we now have. But, I repeat it, we ought to be silent, respectful, and prayerful; for, in a general way, nothing is worse, nothing is more culpable, than to talk and act against an established government. If we be true to ourselves, we can work out our salvation, wherever, or under whatever circumstances, the hand of God has placed us. My opinions, therefore, for the present, must be allowed to have no further influence than to restrain me from taking part in the great evils which are now being done. For this reason I must henceforth enter less into political discussions and more and more into solitude, reflection, and prayer. Prayer especially is the true policy for me.

"Alphonse is spending the summer on the island of Ischia, situated in the Gulf of Gaeta, of which he has sent me delightful descriptions. I myself am filled with anxiety about the health of Césarine, and the marriage of my dear Suzanne, who is now almost twenty-one years of age. We cannot now give her much of a fortune, and unless I soon take for her every possible advantage which may be gained from a proper presentation in society of that incomparable flower of beauty, which may rightly fascinate the heart of an honest man, and which is also a gift from God, to be taken while He is offering it, it

seems to me that I shall come short of my duty as a mother.

"This year I have taken upon myself the habit of going to church very early in the morning, often before daylight, to hear mass. It seems to me eminently fitting to devote these opening moments of the day, free alike from the confusion and the pleasures of the world, to God, thus rendering first unto God that which belongs to God, and then unto the world that which belongs to the world. Sometimes I feel great reluctance in leaving my soft pillow and the mild temperature of my chamber to go out, in any and every kind of weather, to attend what is here called the Mass of the Poor and the Mass of the Servants. But are we not all equally in the grace and power of God? and are not all of us the servants of our fathers, and of our husbands, and of our own children? After entering the church, however, I am always well rewarded by the calm reverence and satisfaction which I feel in that mingled light and shade, by more fervency in my prayers, by greater tranquillity of soul, and by the additional strength which I find for all the remaining duties of the day. It would be my own individual taste and desire to live in still more complete retirement; but when I consider that I have yet two daughters to marry off, I am convinced of the propriety of mingling occasionally with them in the world, of which even after me they and theirs are to form a part. Taking this view of the matter, I am led to believe that I am in the right path, and, so believing, I reassure myself accordingly."

CXV.

"January 27, 1821.

"Alphonse writes me from Rome that he is perfectly happy. This, though, is not the language I was long

accustomed to hear him speak; it must therefore be true (as I trust it is), since he says so himself. He sends me some money for his poor friend, the Abbot Dumont, curate of Bussière, whom he has always loved very dearly, and who is now struggling with both disease and destitution. This mark of remembrance, coming from one so far away, for a needy friend whom it would not be strange if he had forgotten in the midst of his present diversions and happiness, touches me to the heart."

CXVI.

"March 11, 1821.

"Good news! I now hope and expect to see my beautiful Suzanne happily married and comfortably settled quite near me. Monsieur de Montherot, one of our distant relatives, thirty-six years of age, who is endowed with a fine countenance and a superior mind, was struck by her beauty and graces in an interview which he had indirectly sought. This marriage should make me happy, both on account of the good qualities of the husband and the nearness of their home. His estates are in Loire and Burgundy. May the suit succeed! My husband is favorably disposed. Suzanne herself does not yet know that she is the object of all these close interviews and strange whisperings; yet she is so candid, so pure, so obedient, that I have no doubt of her consent whenever I may speak to her on the subject."

CXVII.

"March 21, 1821.

"More good news a few days later! God gives on the one hand and takes away on the other. Let us render hearty thanks for His gifts, and submit cheerfully to His refusals. I have a grandson! My daughter-in-law was

safely delivered, at Rome, on the 8th of March, of a boy, as beautiful as an angel, as his father informs us. They have already named him after his father, Alphonse. He was baptized in the great church so universally known as Saint Peter's. His godfather is a nobleman of Naples, the Marquis Gagliati, and his godmother is the Polish Princess Oginska. This news has made me supremely happy. They say the infant is like me; then I picture him to myself as his father was when I first saw him, thirty years and six months ago. His mother has herself undertaken to nurse him, and I sincerely hope she may succeed. They will come to visit us as soon as she shall have sufficiently recovered."

CXVIII.

"May 12, 1821.

"I have told everything to Suzanne, who, it seems, however, had already come to learn something of the game which we were playing in her behalf. She is virtue and reason combined in perfection. I trust that it may please God to send her him who can and will make her happy. While waiting for the nuptials, her imagination is so well disciplined, her heart is so pure, and she is so devoted to all her duties, domestic and religious, that she does not seem to experience an instant of trouble nor the least disquietude. She has an evenness of temper, a strength of character, and a peace of mind which enchant me."

Here occurs an interruption of three years in my mother's manuscript. Some of the volumes of her jottings may have been mislaid, or the anguish in which she passed these three years, made desolate as they were by the death of Césarine, who slowly wasted away at Chambéry, after the birth of her third child, and which was further saddened by the fatal disease of her dear and

beautiful Suzanne, may have left her neither the necessary leisure nor the moral strength to record her sorrows and her tears. During these years her son and daughter-in-law had made a trip to France, and another to England, and, meanwhile, had lost their little boy. They had a daughter also, the idol of both her mother and her grandmother, and the delight of us all. This daughter seemed destined to recall, in almost every respect, the likeness of that naturally noble grandmother, who preserved all her beauty and dignity even while far advancing in age.

After the most diligent and thorough searching, I have failed to find any more manuscript until we come to the date of June 9, 1824. Under that date the first two or three pages are little else than the echoes of deep sobs. They were written at the bedside of her dear dying Suzanne, amid all the varying emotions of hope and fear caused by the frequent phases of her sickness. It is a long and heart-rending agony, recorded hour by hour, until that last awful moment when the gates of heaven were opened to an angel, and the earth was darkened to an inconsolable mother. I will here extract only a few of these sad notes, which are but too monotonous in their despairing accents.

CXIX.

"June 9, 1824.

'Under a very great affliction, I am now beginning to write a new volume of my manuscript; my heart being continually lacerated by the almost hopeless condition of my poor Suzanne. For several days it seemed as if the disease was making no further progress, and I had a little respite; but yesterday I was again in despair; her weak, wan, and wasted appearance having struck me most poignantly. Oh, this poor child, so calm, so gentle, so good, and yet so full of sorrow! Her husband was also very

much overcome with grief; for, like me, he had allowed himself to hope against hope, in spite of all the unmistakable signs which, long ago, should have convinced us of our self-deception.

"Our friends and relatives have been with us all day, and I am touched to the very depths of my heart by the tender sympathy and interest which they manifest. Still, in calling my attention so continuously to my griefs, their coming frequently has an effect quite contrary to what they intend. How I sigh for deliverance, as if, indeed, we could ever escape from sorrow in this world! I forget too often that human life is only a period of probation. Oh, in the light of all these terrible trials and sufferings of my poor Suzanne, I ought to be able to see clearly how necessary it is to be purified of all our faults, even the smallest of them, in order to secure admittance to heaven. I think sometimes that this disease may be the purgatory of our dear child; and if even she, who appears to us so innocent and so pure, is obliged to undergo such purgation, what may not we ourselves expect? Everything seems to be a cause of pain to her, even the little food which she is able to eat.

"Our only hope now is in miracles; but these always seem possible to those who ask for them as I do. The Prince of Hohenlohe, in whose prayers, at this time, all Europe has so much faith, will celebrate the holy sacrifice in her behalf on the 20th of this month. In his prayers, which are said to be so efficacious, we will all unite with spirit and fervor, on the same day and at the same hour, in our church here. Oh, may we obtain from God the great and miraculous blessing which we thus seek!

"Alphonse and his wife are in Switzerland. I have written to them to return here, in order that I may not be left entirely alone and comfortless in that dread event

which I cannot anticipate without despair, although I now see it pre-announced as inevitable, in the sweet face of my poor, dear, dying, saint-like Suzanne."

CXX.

"July 1, 1824.

"Yesterday we left the country-seat which our good friends, the Cortemberts, had lent us, at Perrière, on the hill overlooking Mâcon and the Saône. The moving was very painful to Suzanne; but I have been thinking, for some time, that I might, perhaps, save her life by bringing her back to our own house at Mâcon. I have established her in my own chamber, where she is as well off as she can well be for fresh air and quietude; and in the evening we have her carried, for a little while, into the garden. I do not myself see any callers; and we are almost as retired here as if we were all in the country.

"Our mass here, for Suzanne's recovery, on the 20th ultimo, at the same hour as that performed by Prince Hohenlohe, was very edifying; but everything now tells me that there is no longer any hope; no, not even in prayer. I cannot think, with any composure of mind, how this angel will leave our abode, or what bed she will sleep in when she changes from mine!

"Alphonse, his wife, and their little Julia have just arrived. I find my own likeness perfectly portrayed in the person of this little child. What a great happiness it is to see ourselves, in old age, living over again and blooming afresh in the pretty little faces of our children's children! It is myself in great part whom I love in this beautiful child! She is truly my very self, as I was at her age; as I was in my innocence; as I was in the bright morning of life.

"Suzanne, who, even now, is an angel, received the

last offices of the Church on Monday, with all the solemn rites of this sacred but sorrowful ceremony. I was apprehensive that she might be much disturbed by it; but, by the grace of God, she was free from every fear, and seemed to receive into her heart a double portion of heavenly piety and peace. During the whole day her spirit seemed to be overflowing with an inexhaustible fund of happiness; and in the evening she said to us, 'Let us now speak of my tranquillity of soul; I am happy; I have done all I could for the purification of my conscience, and all I could for the restoration of my health. God will do now according to His own good pleasure; and I confidently commit myself and all my interests into His hands.' Nevertheless, she always entertains great hopes of regaining her health; and as she is well prepared to go at any time she may be called, it would seem to be a useless cruelty to dissipate her harmless delusions. In the midst of my griefs, I have experienced a great pleasure in the return here of Alphonse and Marianne, whom I found in much better health than I expected. They arrived on Thursday, the 29th ultimo, and started again for Saint Point on the following Saturday. The walking and talking in or about the house, of several persons at the same time, always annoys my Suzanne, in spite of every precaution I may take.

"Alphonse came back on Tuesday, and remained with us until yesterday. He will return again on Monday, and will be away from us as little as possible during these distressful times. His kindness of heart and his manly courage are to me, at this time, the greatest of all worldly consolations."

CXXI.

"July 14, 1824.

"Suzanne is now in the fold of the Great Shepherd. She died day before yesterday, Thursday, at ten o'clock

in the evening. I would like to recall as fully as possible all the circumstances of that death, so edifying, so sweet, so full of consolation for every true Christian, and yet so indescribably heart-breaking for a poor mother. In the midst of my affliction, of my extreme anguish, and of the most soul-harrowing scenes, God in His great mercy has given me a fund of fortitude at which I am even myself astonished, and which must certainly be the blessed result of the numerous and earnest prayers which have been offered up for us by our pious friends. Particularly did I notice the efficacy of these prayers by the wonderfully happy condition of mind and heart of my poor Suzanne during the latter part of her life.

"In spite of the sad state of emaciation and suffering to which her body was reduced, of which I gave a very imperfect description the other day, and which became worse and worse until the very last moment of her life, —in spite of all this, not a single complaint ever escaped her lips, nor a single sigh, nor other sign of distress. On the contrary, she was thoughtful of everything for us and for others, even going so far as to try to assuage our grief. On Sunday morning, seeing that she was very sick, I sent to request the curate to come to see her, as if of his own accord. She was very glad to see him, and while we were all in her presence, she said to me, 'Mother, can I say everything before you? I am afraid of giving you pain; but I think that the sacrament of extreme unction is a grace which ought not to be neglected, and I would like to receive it.* My wishing

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*The translator does not indorse, nor hold herself responsible for, these religious opinions; nor for any other similar or kindred opinions expressed in this book. She has only observed and maintained a fair fidelity to the original work, which, with the exception of a few passages here and there, she claims is of rare excellence.—M. L. H.

this is no sign that my sickness is worse; only it seems to me best to be safe.'

"She had already, while we were at Perrière, and without my knowing anything about it, asked the curate not to let her die without first giving her all the sacraments. He then took advantage of her having previously spoken to him on the subject; and, after talking to her in such a way as to make her feel all the benefits of this last comfort, he went out to prepare everything necessary for the ceremony, and soon afterward returned and solemnly administered to her the sad but holy sacrament of extreme unction. She received the rite with a faith and piety really angelic, and requested that no one would tell her husband, who was, fortunately, absent at the time. Mademoiselle de Lamartine and Sophie were present, and I myself was concealed in a closet on the side of her chamber, overwhelmed with grief, but yet not an entire stranger to divine peace and protection. In dread of its coming, I had often thought of this terrible moment, and feared that I might not be able to support myself through it. I have never again been the same person since the close of that solemnly significant ceremony.

"Suzanne herself was almost gay. I said two or three prayers for her, and read several exhortations with the same mutual calmness as if it had been simply an ordinary act of life. Sometimes she inquired, with a smile, about different persons, 'Do they know the secret?' The next day she asked for a little cross, on which an embossed representation of Christ could be distinctly seen. Although she had one in relief in her chamber, and had also an image of Him near her bed, yet she wanted one in her hand, so that she might kiss it frequently. Fortunately, I found a little silver crucifix, such as she desired, and from that moment until she

died she never let it go out of her hand. She kissed it very often, and we saw her eyes wander almost every instant from the crucifix to the regions above. She never took the slightest nourishment, medicine, nor other thing, without making the sign of the cross both before and afterward. Every other moment, when things were quiet, she would ask me to say prayers; and I did so, making them up as best I could out of my own head and heart, or as God inspired me; and at other times I read to her a few verses from some of the more consoling and sublime Psalms.

"Whenever she became involved in one of her crises of unusual fatigue or suffocation, which we now think must have been the pangs of death, she was yet calm, and found immediate consolation in prayer. So passed her three last days on earth. Her nights were not entirely without repose. We generally left her about eight or nine o'clock with an attendant, a good, trusty woman, who slept in her chamber, and an excellent girl, almost saintly in her goodness, who has been with us more than twenty years, and who slept in an adjoining closet. Sophie and I would get up alternately several times during the night, to see how she was doing. Although she was so well prepared to go, yet she seemed reluctant to abandon all hope of staying. She never spoke of her child, and never once asked to see it. I am sure that this can be accounted for only through a spirit of self-sacrifice on her own part. On the evening preceding her death she said to her husband, 'Oh, my dear husband, how fortunate it is for one in my situation to have done everything which could be done, and to have peace in the heart! If you will do the same thing whenever you may be prostrated by disease, you will do well;' and she repeated several times, 'You promise me to do so, do you not?'

"The day before she died she received the benediction for the moment of death. She received my motherly blessing every evening from Monday till Thursday. I thought that nearly every hour of the day would be her last; and when evening came, it seemed as if I had, in some way, gained a great deal of strength; and so I felt less anxiety for the night. On Thursday evening her depression became very great, and we had to put her on another bed. Changing her from one bed to another was a thing we did but seldom; for there was always danger that she might expire in the effort and distress which it caused her. My poor Sophie took charge of all these changes and other manipulations, with a patience, a skill, and a gentleness which never left her during the whole period of her sister's sickness. God will bless her for all the sweet and sisterly care which she has thus given. From time to time, on Thursday, she fell into light reveries. In the morning she said to me, 'Mother, I have had some unpleasant dreams about you; are you well?' I told her yes, and asked her what she had dreamed. 'Accidents . . .' she said, but seemed to be unable to give any further expression to her ideas.

"The curate came, and she said to him, in a low voice, 'I am afraid I am now too desirous of dying, because I feel myself so ready and so full of faith, that, if I should live, I could hardly ever again be so well prepared, and I might have to commence over again all this preparation for the salvation of my soul. Yet perhaps it is only lassitude which makes me feel thus.'

"Alphonse was present with us all the while, and tried in vain to conceal his tears and the emotions of his voice. She spoke to him sometimes, and affectionately held out her hands to him. She blessed her little boy, who was absent from the chamber, saying, 'Oh, let him be brought

up in the faith which enables me to bear so resignedly my separation from him, from his father, from my mother, and from all my dear, dear friends!'

"I cannot express my feelings at seeing just then the sweetness of her smile as her eyes encountered mine. It seemed to light up and quicken, all of a sudden, her features, which were formerly so glorious in their heavenly beauty, but which now, alas, are so dull and lifeless, no longer transfigured by the effulgence of her soul.

"It was generally I who prayed aloud in the chamber, her brother, on his knees near the door, silently listening and joining in the prayer with us. These occasions were very touching.

"Toward seven o'clock, her reveries became longer, and she seemed disposed to sleep; so I myself retired for a little while, in order to obtain, if possible, a few moments' rest, after so much care and sleeplessness. At midnight I was awakened by a terrible storm, which seemed to shake and threaten the roof above our heads. Rising, I ran immediately to listen at Suzanne's door, not daring to open it, for fear of disturbing her. Hearing nothing, I flattered myself that the storm had not awakened her. At four o'clock in the morning, I went there again, and found everything perfectly still, as before; but this time I made a little noise, to attract the attention of some one in the room, when one of the women, opening the door only wide enough to speak face to face, told me that the night had passed very quietly, and that my Suzanne was resting so peacefully that she needed nothing. Alas, this information was only too true; but I received it literally, and retired again until five o'clock. Then, with a strange sort of presentiment, and no longer able to restrain myself, I entered the chamber, where, just then, they were not expecting me.

There I saw Philiberte, my saint-like servant-girl, of whom I have but too briefly spoken elsewhere, on her knees before the bed, where candles were burning. Still, I did not even then realize the whole truth, but thought that she had only asked again for prayers, and that they were there saying them. Sophie and Alphonse, however, with speechless sorrow, led me away; and then the terrible truth flashed over me instantly, and I knew, without a word from any one, that her spirit was no longer upon the earth. . . .

"They had to send away her sorrow-stricken husband, who was unable to endure calmly so great an excess of grief. I ran and kissed in his cradle her poor little Charles, who was there sleeping peacefully, and who did not suspect in the least that he had just lost a most beautiful and loving mother. Alphonse alone stayed in the house, to see that the last dutiful attentions were paid to his sister's remains. . . .

"Philiberte and the other watcher have told me all the events of that last fatal night. Suzanne's dying moments were calm and sweet, without even a touch of the agony which we so often dread. Some time after we ourselves had retired, she said to her watchers, 'Why do you not lie down?' Accordingly, they withdrew back of her bed, as if acting heedfully upon her suggestion. From there, after a few moments, they saw her kiss her little cross, and then heard a few sighs more deeply drawn than usual. Her voice was never heard again. Everything was stilled in death. It was then nearly ten o'clock, and the two women resolved not to say anything to me about it until morning. In this way did the soul of my poor Suzanne pass upward to its heavenly home.

"My grief is not now extremely bitter. Nearly every day for a year past I have mourned in advance over a

calamity which I tried hard to banish from my thoughts, but which, nevertheless, I could not fail to see but too clearly and too constantly in spite of all my efforts to the contrary. At present I do not weep at all. Perhaps the reason of this is because I am in that first great stupor and numbness in which we do not feel the severity of the blow because we have already been subjected to its paralyzing force. O my God, take me also! I do not care to live any longer except for that all-glorious heaven which I have pointed out to my two daughters, whence now they are calling to me, and where they are waiting for the proper occasion to introduce me! Families may indeed be abruptly separated here on earth, but if they are good they will be reunited in heaven for all eternity. I keep for myself the little cross which they found in her hand, frequently kissing it with veneration, and am resolved not to part with it until the day of my own death.

"I am now at Saint Point with Alphonse. All of us here are now reading Fénelon. In the present condition of our minds we can read no other books than those which treat of things above. All other things seem to us so vain and come so far short of our desire.

"What could I do now without Sophie, my youngest daughter, who is always so gay and so charming? And then there is my dear and fruitful Cecilia, who multiplies herself with all reasonable regularity and rapidity, as if to fill up the empty places caused by the dead and by those otherwise absent."

Here again occurs another long interruption, during which time she speaks only of the many absences and returns of her son, and of the great anxieties which she begins to feel on account of the growing weakness of her husband.

CXXII.

"Tuesday, December 4, 1824.

"Alphonse has returned from Paris without having been elected to the French Academy. Monsieur Droz gained the vacant seat, and I myself have been feeling very badly about it, because I urged Alphonse so earnestly to present himself for it; and more especially on my husband's account, for he too took a deliberate and lively interest in the hoped-for success of our son's candidacy. But God and men have willed it otherwise, and it is our duty to accept the result without bitterness and without murmuring. However painful this ephemeral disappointment may be, it is as nothing in comparison with the deep sorrows of the heart."

CXXIII.

"Tuesday, January 4, 1825.

"The calls and compliments and joys and commotions of New Year's day have unsettled my nerves very much. Nothing brings back to us what we have lost. In receiving some of the kindest wishes of the day, I could not restrain myself from weeping at the thoughts they suggested. A preponderating share of my worldly happiness is in the past. Who will, who can, restore to me the past?

"I had a moment's hope of having a second Alphonse in my son's son; but now that hope is also destroyed. Yet I am very grateful for the son still spared to me; and I am far more happy on account of his tenderness of heart and conduct toward me than because of what the world calls his fame. He knows how to love and treat me well, and that is all I care for. Oh that he may also love the things which I love, especially that faith which gives me so much peace here below, and which proves to

me that the only true immortality is to be attained in and for the future! To me it is a great joy to have him and his wife near me this winter; and the idea of our approaching separation is already beginning to afflict me. It seems to be his lot to live out of France; and I must always love him for himself, and not for my own sake.

"The last moments of Bonaparte at Saint Helena have recently occupied my mind very seriously, and suggested many reflections on the perfect ways of God, and the folly and worthlessness of mere worldly glory. The recent death of Lord Byron, the great English poet, has also even more profoundly impressed me. Truly God is great! Yet it is only required of us that we shall love Him, fear Him, and keep His commandments. I went immediately to announce this last death to my son, myself moved and trembling as if it were to me a personal misfortune. Can it be possible, or is it at all probable, that, at some future day, another mother will tremble and weep while announcing to her son the death of mine? May that sad event happen at the hour and according to the great mercy of our God! Little concerned am I about Alphonse's renown. It is his eternal salvation for which I constantly and fervently pray.

"Alphonse is now writing a poem entitled 'Childe Harold,' in which he celebrates the heroic death of Lord Byron in the cause of Greek independence. There are some passages in this poem which trouble me very much; for I perceive in them a dangerous enthusiasm for the modern ideas in philosophy and politics, quite contrary to the principles of both religion and monarchy,—those two landmarks of my pathway which ought to be his also. On either side of that pathway I see only fogs and pitfalls, and especially the fatal, bottomless precipices of incredulity.

"I knew, in my youth, several of the famous philosophers whose teachings are now attracting the attention of many free-thinkers and dreamers. Grant, O my God, that Alphonse may not be like them! I have frequently represented to him very strongly the danger of these new and startling ideas; but the wind bloweth where it listeth, as saith the sacred book. When a mother has once brought into the world a son, and inculcated in him her own faith, what more can she do but interpose, as best she may, her feeble hand between the torch of that faith and the storms of secular sentiment which threaten to extinguish it? Indeed, I am often very proud of my son; but I am well punished on account of his independence of mind.

"As for myself, to believe and obey seems to be the only wisdom suitable to my condition. This is said to be less poetic; but I find quite as much poetry in submission of mind as in rebellion of spirit. Are the ever faithful angels less poetic and happy than the fallen angels who rose up against God? I would much prefer that my child should have none of the vain talents of this world, rather than that, having them, he should turn against those precious doctrines in which I myself have found so much strength and light and consolation."

CXXIV.

"February 20, 1825.

"Alphonse and his wife and Sophie and I are all living the same retired life, under the same roof, reading together and mourning over our late misfortunes. Sophie's education gives me very little trouble, for she seems to have been born already instructed and entirely pious. In the evening, my husband, myself, and our children being all gathered around the fireside, we read such good books

as will best nourish our minds and souls. My husband seems to love now more than ever before this life of almost perfect seclusion, in which books, and the conversational criticisms which they provoke, are almost the only events. There comes to men a time when they love to retire from the scenes of action, great or small, which they themselves have occupied, and when their greatest apparent pleasure is to become seated and passive, if not indifferent, spectators to the things of the world. Books then afford them their principal entertainment. In history they see the real world passing in review under their very eyes; and in romances they perceive the grotesque and comical features of the imaginary world. Good books are the faithful reflectors of the lives of excellent persons who have ceased to live in themselves, but who, nevertheless, live over again in the lives of others."

CXXV.

"Sunday, June 26, 1825.

"What a long interval has passed without my having written a single line in this book! It is because I have been suffering very much from a severe spell of sickness, so severe that I doubted seriously whether I should ever recover my health. It seemed to me that I saw death itself staring me in the face; and I confess that I was frightened, for I did not feel prepared. . . . Are we ever sufficiently prepared for death? I prayed to Heaven for a prolongation of my life, so that I might have time to prepare and purify myself more acceptably. God has graciously granted me my prayer in this regard; but in the very midst of my convalescence He has again chastised me with a great sorrow. By the merest chance I was told of it without any preparation whatever. Alphonse, in a little poem on the coronation of the king,

has not written one word about the Duke of Orleans, whom he does not like,—sharing in this respect the prejudices of his father and all the other Lamartines. He finds something equivocal, and scarcely excusable, in the conduct of a prince of the royal family, whose father had the misfortune to condemn to death his own relative and king, Louis XVI., who, however, was afterward pardoned, welcomed, and overwhelmed with wealth and honors by the elder branch of the Bourbons; and who then, instead of manifesting a proper devotion to his benefactors, unshaken, as they were, by the severest tests, coolly made friends with all their enemies, and tried to gain popularity at their expense. Alphonse never speaks except with a certain sharply-defined bitterness of what he calls this disloyal conduct on the part of the duke's father; and it is this that sorely troubles me, for I regard the duke himself as an eminently honest and good man, and quite incapable of participating in the crime of his unhappy parent. I must confess, however, that it would be becoming in this prince to be more reserved in his intercourse with those who are opposed to him, and not to surround himself with all those discontented and ambitious spirits, revolutionists and Bonapartists, who make up so heterogeneously what is called his party. But courtesy and charity require us to suppose that his intentions are good; and we ought not to accuse him rashly.

"When Alphonse read to me the verses of his poem, in which he celebrates the deeds of most of the warriors and princes of the royal family, yet without saying a single word about the Duke of Orleans, I was very much grieved, even to tears. I besought him not to pass over in silence, and in this apparently studied manner, a prince in whose house I myself had been brought up, and whose

mother and sister had overwhelmed all my family with kindness. He resisted a long time with much pertinacity, declaring that he himself owed to the Duke of Orleans nothing but silence; that to the Kings Louis XVIII. and Charles X. he owed the honor of having served them both in the army and in diplomatic positions; and that he had inherited from his father a sincere regard and liking for those unhappy princes, and a very decided aversion to their enemies.

"However, I finally obtained his consent, or rather I wrung from him by force of tears, and by adjuring him in the name of my authority as his mother, that he would mention with becoming terms of respect the name of the Duke of Orleans in this poem of homage to the Bourbons. He did it to please me, but was, it seems, both unhappy and unfortunate in the expression of a sentiment which he himself did not feel.

"These verses, which alluded to the 21st of January, and to the beheading of Louis XVI., were regarded as an insult to and by the Duke of Orleans. I do not know exactly how it happened, but it would seem that, in some way or other, the prince heard of it through the bookseller, even before the poem was published, and caused a letter to be written to my son by our relative, Monsieur Henrion de Pansey, who was president of his Council. Monsieur de Pansey, in the name of the prince, asked Alphonse, in suitable terms, to suppress the objectionable passage. My son immediately replied, in very respectful terms also, that he had not intended to wound the feelings of a prince whose family had been so kind to his mother's family, and that he would hasten to write to his printer to suppress the lines which, contrary to the intention of the writer, seemed to be offensive to the Duke of Orleans. He did, in fact, write by the same courier to

his publisher, instructing him not to print the passage in question.

"Everything, therefore, seemed to be satisfactorily settled in this way, when the Duke of Orleans, not knowing that Alphonse had acceded to his request, and more impatient than polite to have the passage suppressed, caused another letter to be written, in which he threatened to use his influence against him at court, and warned him to beware, as a first prince of the blood never lacked the means of retaliating an injury on a young man who would persist in offending him so gravely. When he received this letter, my son could not restrain his natural pride thus abruptly aroused. He declared that he would not, under any consideration, yield to a threat what he had already yielded to a request; and so, by courier after courier, he wrote to his publisher to let the passage stand, and to print it just as it was at first written.

"Nevertheless, in order not to offend unnecessarily the Duke of Orleans, he wrote to him the same day, stating that the duke's letter of intimidation having been already noised abroad by the newspapers, which could not have known of it except through some indiscretion at the Royal Palace, and that as the suppression of the particular passage referred to by the several newspapers issued in the interest of the duke could not now be attributed to anything less than a sort of cowardice, which would be a disgrace to the character of the writer, he felt constrained to let it stand precisely as he first wrote it, and hoped the duke himself would appreciate this supreme necessity of honor, and not attribute it to any deliberate purpose of offending him. It is only just to add that the duke replied immediately, saying that he recognized this superlative necessity of honor in the new situation in which my son was placed, by the premature publicity given to

the affair in the newspapers of the party of liberal opinions. Everything was thus explained on both sides, and the passage appeared.

"All this was to me the cause of a very great heartache, greater indeed than I ever dared to tell either my husband or my son. In my infancy I had been overwhelmed with kindness by this august family, and had learned from my mother to sincerely respect and cherish its name. In circumstances of profound sorrow for my mother, and for other members of my family, I had had recourse to the affection of the Princess of Orleans, whose heart I always found full of generous sympathy for me. My son and husband were ignorant of many of these intimate relations; and it was not perfectly convenient for me to let them know of them. Judge, then, of my perplexity and affliction in considering that this excellent princess might wrongfully but naturally attribute to my own ingratitude or forgetfulness an offense to her family, committed by the head and hand of my son!

"After spending several nights in tears, I wrote to the princess to undeceive her, and to express to her all my pain on account of her own good self. She replied, rather as a friend than as a princess, saying that she well understood both my position and my grief. Thanks to God, all has terminated well; and my only fear now is that the incident may leave a secret coolness and soreness between the prince and Alphonse, and be the cause of putting still greater distance between my son and that family to which, more than to any other in France, he should look for protection and promotion. But the prejudices of the royalist noblemen in the provinces against the name of Orleans are unjust and extreme, and seem to flow with the blood from father to son. I repeat it again, it has been to me a great sorrow, which I have felt

all the more keenly because I could not confide it to any one. The proud susceptibility of my husband could not have understood my correspondence with the Princess of Orleans, nor the many delicate attentions and favors which my family received from hers on various occasions.

"Alphonse is about to go far away again, and for a long time, in diplomacy. He thinks he will be sent to Germany. I cannot help weeping when I think of it. How rapidly my house is becoming empty! Only a few years ago it was full of cheerful life and noise and commotion. Now it reminds me of those large and tenantless nests which I see, in the autumn, on the tops of the elm-trees in the court-yard of Saint Point; instead of eggs and little birds, there is no longer anything in them but dust and snow, and the winds are carrying them away twig by twig. Even in our best estate here on earth, what are we?"

CXXVI.

September 18, 1825.

"At last my children have started from Saint Point on their long journey. How lonely I feel! They are going to live in Italy,—God alone knows for how long a time! It is now my intention to return to the city, as my husband, since he does not hunt any more, prefers to live there. I myself am very sorry to go, for I am as well off here as I can be anywhere in my sorrows. I am now passing many of my mornings with Nicole, whose 'Moral Essays' strike my mind with great force. In the evenings I read the works of Madame de Sévigné, who is my favorite author in the style of conversation. Much of my time is also taken up with thoughts of the absent and the dead. Alas, how many there are of these!

"Yesterday I received a visit from that excellent, amiable, and resigned Monsieur . . ., who desired so much

to marry my dear Césarine. He did not speak on the subject at all; but the fact alone of his presence, and his tenderness of manner toward me, spoke more significantly than any words which he could have used. After he went away I wept much. All those whom I see, and who have loved my daughters, are to me so many souvenirs. I shall probably weep tears of sorrow all the rest of my life. Nevertheless, I am absolutely certain of yet finding and embracing again my lost children. What a great happiness it is to have a faith like mine! If religion did nothing else but give us this faith in the return and renewal of the sweetest portion of the past, we would still have superabundant reasons to praise God for it; and who of us all has not at least one bright hope, strengthened by a happy confidence, indissolubly connecting the future with the past?"

CXXVII.

"MILLY, October 24, 1825.

"I am here alone, first to put everything in order, and then to close up the house. My husband and all the others have already gone to the city. I have been to Saint Point, having ridden there on an ass, accompanied by the gardener, in order to arrange the books and orange-trees and pots of flowers which Marianne, my daughter-in-law, earnestly recommended to my care when she left for Italy. I remained at Saint Point for some time, on account of the rain, well cared for, however, in the dear old deserted mansion, by that wonderful saint on earth, Marie Litaud, who ably and honestly manages the household affairs in the absence of her masters. I have made this poor girl very happy indeed, by placing her with my son. Near by was the church, so dear to me by the recollection of all the prayers which I used to offer up there with my sweet little ones, now saints in heaven.

I was happily surrounded with books, and with a fullness of the other comforts of a country home; too much so, perhaps. There I took great pleasure in silence and solitude, seated in the parlor, at a corner of a large fire-place where I tried to call back my scattered thoughts and fix them once more in proper meditation on eternal things before plunging again into the bustle and noise of this vain world.

"I have received good news from Florence, where my son and his wife are now established. They have done well in arranging their affairs here; for it is but right and prudent for them to have some certain spot to look forward to, as a place of repose for their thoughts as well as for their effects. In the newspaper for which Madame de Genlis writes, an article has appeared this week sharply criticising the poetry of my son. It is only one of the wordy and bloodless sorties of an hereditary family war. Madame de Genlis and my mother used to lead two opposing camps in the Royal Palace. Yet I am very sensitive to these stabs at the reputation of my son; and it was my desire that the article should be answered. That was the prompting of a mother's vanity; but it is doubtless better to accept these humiliations without resentment. What is the good of charity if it does not prevent us from retaliating such superficial pin-scratches as these?

"Why is it that we all desire absolute superiority in everything, both for ourselves and for our children? If we have any important advantages by inheritance or otherwise, we should use them with thankfulness and modesty; if we have them not, we should refrain from envying those who do possess them. The gifts of God are favors, and not merits. I shall endeavor to accustom myself to bear with becoming resignation these slanderous attacks on my son, which so often appear in the columns of cer-

tain sensational newspapers, especially those of Orleanist or Bonapartist proclivities. I have bestowed on Alphonse, and have centered in him, too much self-esteem, which is, I fear, only my own vanity disguised; but I must pardon myself, notwithstanding; for I am his mother, and cannot help feeling as I do, no matter how hard I may try to the contrary."

CXXVIII.

"February 1, 1826.

"I do not write any more now, except in the way of jotting down very brief notes. In my position as President of the Bureau of Charity, the care of the poor of the city takes up nearly all my time; and indeed I have to overtax myself frequently in more than one way to make a proper distribution of food and clothing to the many helpless sufferers during this rigorous winter. I am ably assisted, however, by an accomplished young married lady, Madame de Villeneuve, whose husband is now Prefect of the Department. She is almost like a daughter to me. It seems somewhat strange that young married ladies should show me so much friendly attention. Perhaps it is in return for my sincere sympathy for them, which in my heart so soon ripens into affection, through my long habit of loving my own daughters, of whom these young ladies remind me. Madame de Villeneuve has drawn for me some beautiful screen-pictures, each one presenting a view of the different houses once occupied by Madame de Sévigné, who is, so to speak, one of the maternal ancestors of my mind and heart. Madame de Villeneuve pleasantly suggested that these souvenirs would serve as illustrations of the works of this charming author, which she always sees either on my knees or on the mantel-piece. What excellent society we can always find among our favorite authors! Though they be long

dead, yet we can live delightfully with them in reading their great and happy thoughts."

CXXIX.

"April 27, 1826.

"The Abbot of Lamartine is dead. For a long time past his life has been little else than an almost daily expectation of this event. I hope and believe God will be good to him who was so good to others. In spite of his preferences, he was impelled into an ecclesiastical career, which was entirely unsuited to him. He lived like a hermit on his fine estate at Montculot, which he has bequeathed to Alphonse, subject to an annual allowance to my husband and a certain sum to be given at once to each one of his five sisters. We have written Alphonse to request leave of absence to come home, so that he may arrange matters properly, and take possession of this fine residence with its beautiful forests."

CXXX.

"May 24, 1826.

"I have suffered a great deal during the last few days, on account of a terrible affair affecting Alphonse, occasioned by a passage in his poem of 'Childe Harold,' relating to Italy. He has been dangerously wounded in a duel with Colonel Pepe. I have trembled, and am still trembling so much for his soul as well as for his life, that I do not feel able to write any more about it here just now. If he has been guilty in the sight of God, he has surely repented of his sin, or must do so, or be lost forever! O my God, I beseech Thee to reclaim my son, and to lead him henceforth in the paths of peace and righteousness!

"They write me now that he has recovered, and that

everything has been amicably arranged. He is writing now, during his hours of leisure, a series of profoundly religious poems called 'Harmonies.' Several fragments which he has sent me are entirely after my own heart. Ah, this is the use which I have always desired he should make of a talent which is truly divine only as it soars up again to the great God who gave it!"

CXXXI.

"MILLY, July 22, 1826.

"I have now spent three days at Milly, and have not yet felt the slightest desire to be elsewhere. I would like it if I could dwell here all the time with my husband and Sophie. It is sad for us all to be thus separated from each other. I am beginning now to feel very sensibly the feebleness of advancing age, and miss more and more that activity of body and mind which used to afford me so much pleasure, even in solitude.

"My sixty years, now but little short of completion, begin to weigh heavily upon me. I can scarcely believe that I am so old; but the record of each year tells against me, and it must be true. It does not make me particularly sorrowful to think of this; only I do hope and pray that God may be pleased to grant me grace to employ the little remnant of my days and faculties in a manner pleasing to Him, and enable me to give my whole thought to preparation for that marvelous eternity which is so rapidly advancing to meet me. And yet my mind is still easily diverted to other objects, and, at times, is even prone to be occupied with earthly considerations. For example, I have, perhaps, looked with too much interest at the real beauty and prospective value of our vineyards. There has been a dreadful drought which has damaged them considerably; but now they have regained their verdure

and luxuriance, and are simply superb. Our whole income, as we expect it for the next year, is thus suspended in the material of these myriads of little grapes, pendent from their vines. . . . Truly, man himself is much like an insect, which lives upon a leaf, and which dies when the leaf itself decays. O God, protect, I beseech Thee, our own green leaves, and especially the fruit-nursing leaves of our poor laborers!

"Alphonse is now intrusted with the diplomatic affairs of France in Tuscany, at Lucca, and at Parma; and now that all the French embassadors are absent from every one of the Italian States except Rome, they have added twenty thousand francs to his salary. The king and his ministers are all very much pleased with him, and he with his position. His only fault is in representing his country with a little too much liberality and extravagance; but Providence will take care of him. No longer have I any need to worry myself about him. By his tender devotion, and his anxious cares for all my little affairs, he pays me back, with double measure, for all the pains and sacrifices he cost me during the restless period of his youth. I should now be a happy mother if I had not lost the two flowers of my crown. Oh, what an empty and dismal space their disappearance makes in my garden, as I walk there in the twilight, seeking them with roving eye and with listening ear! Whether I wish to do it or not, I must separate myself more and more from this world. The night approaches. How much longer am I to remain amid the miserable scenes of earth? God knows well the time; and I leave myself entirely in His hands, without caring to count the days, only imploring permission to remain long enough to merit from His bounty a more permanent felicity.

"I have just undertaken a heavy piece of worsted-work,

which will, perhaps, last as long as my life. It is a rug for Alphonse's chamber at Saint Point. As the feet of himself and family shall press its meshes, after I shall have passed away, they may think, and will think rightly, that each stitch was a thought for him and for them. Alas, this frail texture will probably exist at least one hundred years after they and I shall be no more. . . . I feel sad."

CXXXII.

"Tuesday, December 3, 1826.

"We are now considering a certain proposition for the marriage of my Sophie. As soon as she shall be happily married, then, in truth, will my work on earth be done. Then will I be able to say, with Simeon of old, 'Now, Lord, let Thy servant depart in peace.' The gentleman who has made the proposition is Monsieur de Ligonne, from Mende, in the mountains of Cévennes. He is said to be much respected for his fine mind and agreeable manners. His property, though not of great value, is yet large enough for an ordinary family. The habits of life in the country where he lives are not luxurious; and Sophie, on her own part, is both reason and piety personified."

CXXXIII.

"May 5, 1827.

"My eldest brother-in-law, Monsieur de Lamartine, the head of the family, died on Sunday last, at eleven o'clock in the morning. He was nearly eighty years of age. He preserved, to the very end of his earthly existence, his vigor of mind. His sister and I were both present. She and I received his last farewell and his last sigh. He has died much regretted throughout the whole of his section of the country. He was a man of a very cultivated mind. His knowledge was almost universal in

its scope; and his conversation was always wonderfully varied and interesting. During the whole period of his life, both in the family and in the world about here, he reigned almost like a king. In early life he had been an officer in the light dragoons, under Louis XV.; but his delicate health soon called him back to Mâcon, where he took charge of the large and embarrassed estates of my father-in-law, situated in Doubs and Burgundy. He was generally listened to as if he were an oracle; and he was worthy of all the attention he received. He was associated, in one way or another, with all the eminent men of the Constituent Assembly, and with the principal leaders in science and literature, such as Buffon, Mirabeau, and the great economists.

"The deceased head of the Lamartines lived at home in good style, with his sisters, who were unmarried, like himself. He has left his undivided estate at Saint Pierre to Alphonse and to his niece Cecilia (Madame de Cessia), and his estate at Monceau to his sister, Mademoiselle de Lamartine, who will bequeath it to Alphonse before she dies. Nothing important was ever decided or done in the family except by him or in substantial accordance with his ideas and wishes. This inflexible autocracy on his part has often thwarted my projects, and occasioned very painful annoyances, sometimes in regard to the marriage of my daughters, and at other times in regard to my son and his education; but, after all, I may have been wrong, and he right, since everything has turned out so well.

"Mademoiselle de Lamartine, the sister of the deceased, is also left very rich; but in reality she is one of the poor in spirit, for she absolutely denies herself every indulgence of luxury in order to be able to give as much as possible to the poor and unfortunate. She is a real saint

upon earth. I have never before known a person so little bound to the things of this world. There is nothing in her holy manner of life which is in the least intolerant or austere toward others; nor does she ever say or do anything which would have a tendency to wound their feelings in the slightest degree. When once outside of the church, or her own chapel, where she spends most of her time, her piety turns immediately and entirely to practical gentleness and goodness. The smiles of the blessed are always upon her lips, and visions of heaven in the expression of her eyes. Her greatest misfortune is one of over-scrupulousness in exactions against herself. She does not trust sufficiently in the boundless mercy and benevolence of God. Yet she is, in truth, the angel of the household, and a blessing to the whole city.

"The preliminaries of the marriage of my daughter Sophie are all arranged. Our neighbors, Monsieur de Morangie and his wife, who are also our relatives, have formally brought to us the young gentleman, presented him, and asked for him our daughter's hand. I am really charmed by his modest and thoughtful appearance, by his exquisite air of refinement, and by the wonderful evidences of delicacy and perfection observable in everything he does. I think he is one of those rare men who, at first sight, impress us with a conviction of the probable happiness in store for their intended wives; but, alas, he will take my Sophie so far away from me; and they will spend with us only six months of the year! What will become of me without that dear child, who has so long and so affectionately nestled around me as if she were the sprightly shadow of all the others? She is as candid and guileless as a child of only eight years, and yet as mature in judgment as a woman of sixty. By my own election she was my confidante and adviser in almost every important

matter; and I think it probable that our constant intercourse, which was so free and full that we lost sight of the difference in our respective ages, contributed in no small degree to the development of her judgment in advance of her years. In piety she is already an angel; and if it were possible for one to be too pious, I should have doubts about her on that account. She is quite motherly in her ideas and ways, even before she has any family whatever; and her children, if it please God to give her any, will, I dare predict, be very happy.

"I shall accompany my daughter as far as Mende, but will stay there with her only a few days. It is not proper that I should now leave my husband alone for any considerable length of time. He suffers somewhat from his infirmities, but still more from restlessness and weariness when I am away."

CXXXIV.

"January 13, 1828.

"How much more shall I write in this book of the years 1800 and odd? God alone knows; I leave myself entirely to Him. What now grieves me most is that I am still so much attached to the earth by a long series of passionate cravings. Nevertheless, I often feel comforted in the belief that my heart is truly devoted to God; and I pray and beseech Him to have mercy on me and my family. The present condition of France causes me great fear; for the journals of the day are kindling the flames of excitement not only in the minds but also in the hearts of the people. We have had a most noisy and feverish contest here over the recent election between Monsieur de Rambuteau and Monsieur Doria, the rival candidates. God must be grievously offended by these bitter contentions, wherein they mutually defame and traduce each other's characters. Monsieur de Villèle has

been dismissed from the Ministry. Many of our public men seem to be enraged against religion, which is my chief care in politics. I do not like in the least this eternal war of invectives between the partisan journals. How could men ever conceive and put in practice the idea of this unlimited liberty of the press, which is said to be a necessity under constitutional government? I am afraid this government, from which we have expected so many good things, will bring us only storms and strife, even in private families. It is oftener the spirit of men than the spirit of God which inspires these wrangling newspapers. O Heaven, is there, then, nothing but dissimulation and vanity in all systems of human government?

"Monsieur de la Maisonforte, our Minister at Florence, died at Lyons, while on his return to Tuscany. Monsieur de Vitrolles has been appointed in his place, but it will be a long time yet before he will go to his post, and, judging from the general aspect of things now, Alphonse will probably be retained indefinitely in Italy. Sophie, who is all the society and all the consolation I have this winter, is nearly ready to start again for Mende. My poor husband suffers severely and constantly from his chronic and painful infirmity, and I am now devoting myself entirely to his comfort. I try to make him forget time, and would like to forget it myself, until my son comes back from Italy. They are discussing the question of appointing him Minister of France to a distant foreign country. What would become of me if a new appointment (even though it might be higher and better for himself) should exile him in some far-off region for a long term of years? How sorrowful, indeed, may yet be the close of my days, after a long life of anxiety! Where, in all this world, can I find refuge except in prayer? This

it is, and this only, which always calms me, as if I were holding converse with an old, well-tried, and all-powerful friend. Oh, what a great happiness it is to be able to believe even in the possibility of this living and sensible communion of a creature with its Creator!"

CXXXV.

"April 15, 1828.

"Here I am again, this morning, at Milly, but only for a few minutes. It is here, more than at any other place, that I always feel a desire to write certain things in this neglected journal, so soon, perhaps, to be entirely and forever abandoned. For reasons of age and feebleness, and for other reasons, I do not now take the same interest as formerly in either reading or writing. The events which now interest me most are occurring far away; and time and circumstances and all mundane things seem to me to be passing very rapidly. As we increase in years, after having already grown old, we realize so perfectly the emptiness and vanity of everything, that we are far less earnest in preserving or recording our passing impressions. Nevertheless, there are certain periods and facts which I desire to notice, from time to time, not so much for myself as for the benefit of my children. My last steps are those which, as I trust, will lead me to heaven; and I must not wholly neglect to mention them. I am well aware of the present actual existence of my old-womanhood, though others pretend not to notice it at all, telling me, with pleasant smiles, that I look to be only about thirty years of age! But, as Virgil says, in a passage which I was reading, this evening, in Boisgermain's translation, I see the shadows are lengthening behind me."

CXXXVI.

"September 15, 1828.

"At length Alphonse has come, having arrived here on Wednesday, the 10th of this month, with his wife, his mother-in-law, and his charming little daughter; all in excellent health. Thanks, a thousand thanks, unto our God! Alphonse, however, is very thin, which troubles me. But I will soon become accustomed to that. I have been very happy, much excited, and busily occupied ever since they came; and, at my age, any great agitation, whether caused by pleasure or by pain, is rather difficult to support. Therefore my own health is not quite so good as usual. Recovery, however, is generally easy and certain when the heart is content. Contentedness of heart, though, is a rather rare thing in this world, and mine is far from being in a perfectly happy condition. There are many things, real or imaginary, which trouble me.

"Nowhere in the world is it possible to see anything prettier and more amiable in everything, considering her age, than little Julia. She is a real treasure, and, thus far, has been wonderfully well brought up. Her mother is more perfect than ever, fulfilling all her duties with simple piety, and without any mixture whatever of affectation. She has also made progress in many of the higher accomplishments of the age, and now paints beautifully. As specimens of her own artistic skill she has brought us several charming pictures, among others two very fine portraits of Julia."

CXXXVII.

"MILLY, October 3, 1828.

"I have been here, entirely alone, since Monday, the 22d of September, having come to superintend our vint-

age. Alphonse and Marianne, with her mother and Julia, left Mâcon on Wednesday, the 17th ultimo, to go to Montculot, where they were all received as the barons used to be in olden times. The good people came out to meet them on the road, the women and children dressed in white, and the men playing instruments of music and firing guns. They returned their kindness by a brilliant entertainment in the gardens and groves of the castle, which extend away until they are lost in the surrounding woods.

"From Montculot Alphonse went alone to Paris, where his friends called him to let him know, in confidence, that there was talk and danger of a new revolution, concocted by one of the discontented and over-ambitious Bourbons. Alphonse assures me that, as he thinks, the plot will fail, but that if the Bourbons, whom he loves as well as I do, do venture to take this step, they will sink under the weight of public opinion. Perhaps he is right. From an outside view one can sometimes judge better of what is taking place in his own country than he can from a view within. As for myself, I am both sick and dismayed at the prevalence of these political fevers increasing every morning, which the journals of the two parties are only aggravating, and into which many of even the wisest and the best are thrown, in spite of their cooler judgments. Sometimes I am filled with fear that everything may soon be wrecked and ruined under a government thus subject to such chaotic turmoils of opinion."

CXXXVIII.

"November 7, 1828.

"Alphonse has just arrived. He was very well received at Paris, especially by the king, Charles X. He would have been sent immediately to Spain, as First Secretary of

Legation, if he had accepted the proffered position; but he preferred to wait for the London mission, which they promised to give him within a year, and from which, in due time, the Secretary is almost always promoted to the very high and honorable office of Minister Plenipotentiary. He has brought me a beautiful chandelier for my parlor at Mâcon, and also a large sum of money, of which, as he rightly guessed, I was in great need for the general expenses of housekeeping. The receipt of this money will save me from the necessity of afflicting my poor husband, who might have been annoyed and vexed if I had had to call on him for it. How happy, how very happy, I am at this reunion! My children will pass the winter with us at Mâcon. They are now at Saint Point. Alphonse has sent me some poetry which he has just composed at that place, and which has deeply moved me. In these verses he has expressed very exactly many of my own thoughts. Verily, he is my very voice, the proclaimer of my own sentiments; for I too have a keen sense and profound appreciation of both the true and the beautiful; but, unfortunately, I become almost dumb whenever I desire to express them, even to God. At all times, when I meditate, I have in my heart a sort of great glowing furnace; but the flames do not come out. However, God, who graciously listens to me, has no need of my words. I thank Him for having given them to my son."

Here follows a hymn of gratitude and blessing to this same son.

CXXXIX.

"July 13, 1829.

"Under this date, and in this wide gap, I jot down some of the particulars of my recent journey to Paris. Thanks to my worthy son, it was one long-continued intoxication of pleasure. It was a real happiness to me to

be able to see once again that splendid city of my childhood, and to make there the acquaintance of the many friends of fame whom Alphonse now has among those most highly distinguished by birth and by talents. Madame Récamier, whom they are so complimentary as to say I resemble, welcomed me with exquisite grace and cordiality. I was present at her house to hear there a reading by Monsieur de Chateaubriand. He read his own tragedy of Moses; but his face and general appearance impressed me more than his poetry. He has the majestic bearing of a king surrounded by his court. I like much better the natural and modest mien of many other men, of great name and fame, who were there, or whom I saw in my youth. After all, glory, even worldly glory, does have a great charm for me. I used to think that if my son should ever become possessed of the least little share of it I would be only too proud; but now I ask of God, for him, many other things before that."

CXL.

"September 21, 1829.

"My good Alphonse overwhelms me with affection. Like all my other children, he is a child of my heart. It is always he who now comes to my aid in my days of difficulty and distress. He has just engaged to pay for us three thousand francs which we owe for rent to my sister-in-law, Madame de Villars. It is the second time he has done us this great favor. I chronicle here all these instances of his perfect affection for me; and, in the fullness of my heart, I renew acknowledgments of the thousands and thousands of blessings which I owe to God for my children.

"Alphonse is not here at present, he having gone on business to his estate at Montculot, near Dijon. He re-

fused the post to which he was called by the new Secretary of State, Monsieur de Polignac, fearing to associate his name with an administration which is now exciting a great outcry of public reprobation. Monsieur de Polignac insisted, but my son replied that on no account whatever would he risk the danger of being considered an accomplice, not even a subordinate one, in a conspiracy against the Charter; that, in his opinion, such a conspiracy, if carried out, or even if only attempted, would result in the overthrow of the Bourbons; that he knew very well that Monsieur de Polignac had not now any intention of the kind, but that the mutual hostility between the administration and the country threatened to bring on this fatal result, in spite of his efforts to the contrary; and that he respectfully prayed Monsieur de Polignac to forget him. My son sent me a copy of his letter, which I find, unfortunately, but too well conceived and argued. It will exasperate his friends in the government, and may, perhaps, bring to a speedy and final termination his diplomatic career. I think it is, indeed, very unfavorable for his future prospects; but he must act according to his principles, cost what it may. Popular opinion is the conscience of politicians. The sentiments of his letter may possibly be useful to him in days to come.

"There is just now a vacant seat in the French Academy. Many members, among others Monsieur Laine and Monsieur Collard, have written to my son, requesting and advising him to present himself as a candidate, with the fullest confidence, if not absolute certainty, of being elected this time. He has refused to do so, with a pride and haughtiness which I may be wrong in approving, but which I do approve nevertheless. They have refused him once, and he will not, under any circumstances, again solicit their suffrages. As it is prohibited to elect a can-

didate who does not make the customary calls of courtesy on the members, I suppose he will not be elected. My vanity, always ambitious for him, suffers a little, I confess; but let God humiliate this pride in the son, and this selfishness in the mother, as much as He will, for He only knows and does all things well. I consent to Divine chastisement with all the superior part of my being.

"I must, however, here write down a great gratification of this mother's vanity, as yet so little crushed. In a public session of the Academy of Mâcon, three weeks ago, there was in attendance an immense concourse of people, the General Council and all the notabilities of the city and surrounding country being present. It was a very imposing assemblage. A great many interesting papers were read, among others a chapter from the 'History of the Restoration,' by Monsieur de Lacretelle, and a fragment of 'A Journey through Greece,' by Monsieur Quinet, a young man justly distinguished for his vast fund of knowledge. Alphonse was to recite some poetry, and his appearance was looked forward to with much impatience. When his turn came, they applauded in advance, and cried out that they wished to see him. He arose in a deferential and becoming manner, and began to deliver a brief and extemporaneous speech in prose, in order to gain the sympathy of his fellow-citizens and to tell them truly how appreciative he was of their approval. His exordium pleased them very much, and the applause which followed was, for a time, perfectly deafening. Afterward, he recited a poetical address to Monsieur de Bienassis, in which there are many beautiful and brilliant stanzas. He was frequently interrupted by the most unequivocal signs and proofs of satisfaction. Marianne and I were at first deeply moved, and afterward overwhelmed with congratulations, and, I may add, also, with happiness and pride.

Surely, it seems to me, our pride was excusable in this case. May God's will be done at all times and in all things! He sees clearly into my heart, and knows that what I most desire is that my son may devote his noble talents and abilities exclusively to the glory of Him from whom he received them.

"Now let me consider briefly a few of the characteristics of my other children. I have good reason to be proud of them all for their sterling qualities. I love to repeat before the Lord, in the shaded alleys of my garden at Milly, and near the house where my children were born, that verse of the Psalmist in which he says, 'O Lord, Thou hast been my Shield and my Helper from my youth up. Forsake me not now in the days of my old age! Withdraw not from me Thy right hand, when my strength shall no more uphold me!'

"Alas, alas, I begin to reflect much on the rapid decline of my life. I can now reasonably look forward to only a short remnant of days; but when I gaze back on all I have passed through, it seems as if I had lived a very long time."

CXLI.

"MILLY, October 21, 1829.

"To-day is the thirty-ninth anniversary of the birth of Alphonse, my first-born. I am quite alone here, and have devoted most of the day to such reflections as will, I trust, nourish my soul and strengthen me against the day of death. How often, at different periods of my life, have I thus turned and returned, in this quiet walk of meditation, sometimes silently pouring out my heart in adoration, and at other times, when nobody could either see or hear me, clasping my hands in audible prayer! Alas, what would very often have become of me, in the midst of my tribulations, within and without,

if the all-sustaining goodness and power of God had not visited me in my devotions, and suggested more holy and consoling thoughts than my own! I recognize it as one of the very greatest blessings vouchsafed to me from God, that I have this taste for gathering in my wayward thoughts to meditate on Him. It is God Himself who has graciously enabled me, almost every day of my life, to steal away from the bustling and corroding cares with which I was beset, and to devote a few hours, or at least a few minutes, exclusively to His worship. He Himself loves this soul-to-soul converse with His divine Mercy; and it seems to me that He always lends His ear to hear the throbbings of a pious heart opening up its desires to Him. To-day I felt the truth of this more than ever before, and came away bathed in tears, without having noticed it while I was walking. It appeared to me as if my whole life was being lived over again, and as if all persons and all things were passing in review before me and before Him, my Creator and my Judge. Oh that He may be indulgent and merciful toward me in that awful day of judgment which is so rapidly approaching, and which, for me especially, is already so near!

"I saw myself, as if it were but yesterday, a mere child, playing upon the picturesquely arranged and beautifully decorated walks and lawns of the Grand Park at Saint Cloud; and then a young canoness, singing and praying in the chapel of the Order of Salles, undecided whether or not to take world-renouncing vows, like my companions, and so consecrate my whole life, in this place of retreat between time and eternity, to songs and praises unto the Lord of all.

"I saw my husband, young, handsome, and in a rich uniform, come to visit his sister, who was also a canoness, now Madame de Villars, under whose care I had

been placed, she being older and more rational in her ideas than myself. I perceived that he soon began to notice me more particularly than any one of the others, and took advantage of every opportunity to call on his sister, who, as I have already remarked, had me somewhat especially in charge. I myself observed and liked his noble expression; his graceful and dignified bearing, with a mild touch of the military in it; his daring though respectful glance; and a certain air of lofty pride which seemed to govern and soften itself only for me.

"I remembered the smothered emotions of joy in my heart when he induced his sister to interrogate me, in order to ascertain whether I would consent to his making a formal proposition to my family for me in marriage; then our first conversation in the presence of his sister; then the walks we took in the adjacent grounds of the Order, with my companions older than myself; then the positive proposal to my parents, their long opposition, and the many tears shed before God during three full and weary years of uncertainty, in order to gain what in truth seemed impossible, a very miracle, the consent of his own parents; and then, at last, our years of happiness in this little solitude at Milly, which at that time, indeed, was much more humble than it is to-day; my despair when, so soon after our marriage, he sacrificed everything, even myself, to go (yet frantic with grief on my account) to his post of perilous duty at Paris, to defend there, as he did on the 10th of August, the pālace of the king; the divine protection which enabled him to escape, though covered with blood, from the Garden of the Tuileries; his flight; his return here; his imprisonment; my heart-piercing anxiety for his life; my frequent visits to the wicket-gate of his prison, where I used to carry our son and hold him up to be kissed through

the grating; my running hither and thither with my child in my arms, all over the city, to Dijon, and to Lyons, and the effort to soften the hearts of the rough representatives of the people, whose single word was for me life or death; the fall of Robespierre; my husband's return to Milly; the successive births of my seven children; their education; their marriages; and the disappearance forever from the earth of those two particular angels, for whose loss the presence of all the others could not console me!

"And now the sweet repose which comes after so many years of weary toil! Repose? yes, repose, but with it also old age; for I am old, whatever any one may say to the contrary. These trees, which I planted; this ivy, which I myself sowed on the north side of the house, so that Alphonse, in his metrical description of Milly, in his 'Harmonies,' might not lie, even in poetry; these tufts which already cover the whole wall, from foundation to roof; these walls themselves, now growing dingy and mossy; these cedars, which used to be no higher than my youngest daughter, Sophie, when she was only four years of age, but which now permit me to pass freely under their branches, the lowest of which are still higher than my uplifted head; all these things tell me plainly enough that I am now old! Besides, the graves of many of our old peasants, whom I knew when they were young, and near which I now walk when I go to church, tell me even more plainly and unmistakably that my abode here is not permanent. Ere long the eternal resting-place for my mortal remains will be dug elsewhere.

"It makes me weep when I think of all the dear ones whom I will have to leave behind me at my departure,—my poor husband, the faithful companion of my younger years, who, though he is not becoming feeble, yet suffers,

and who now has need of me in his suffering, as he once needed me, in other days, for his happiness; my children also, my precious children! Alphonse, his wife, now become for me, by her affection and her virtuous life, a sixth daughter; Cecilia and her charming little ones, a third generation of hearts, who love, and whom we ourselves cannot help but love; and then those who are already missing, but who seem to follow me like a shadow at sunset as I walk and meditate in my garden; my Césarine, the child, the girl, the woman of marvelous beauty, buried now behind that far-off horizon of the Alps, whence her beloved and loving memory continually rises up and comes to me; my Suzanne, that earthly saint even while yet young, who wore a crown of glory on her brow, and whom God took away from me in order to leave properly impressed on my mind a true image of His angels of purity!

"Yes, here I am again, alone, as I was before having borne my fruits, some of which have fallen to the ground, like those from these trees, whilst others have been carried far away by the great Gardener of the Gospel. Ah, what manifold thoughts entice and attract me to this garden, follow me here, and at last drive me out when they have filled my heart too full, and my eyes are bathed in tears! Verily I too have had, and have yet, my own Garden of Olives!

"Formerly this garden was my Garden of Delight, as says the Song of Solomon; but now it is bare; it has become a prey to the spoiler; it has been stripped of its chief treasures and attractions; in truth, it is for me now only a Garden of Olives, where I have come to keep my watch on the eve of eternity! Yet it is still dear to me, endeared even by the empty spaces which time and death have made in and around it. Especially dear to me is it

when I look yonder (though I look in vain), under the linden-trees, to see the white dresses of my little girls, and when I listen to hear, perchance, as aforetime, the joyful exclamations of my children over a flower or an insect discovered in their grass-plot. What had I done for God, that He should give me, as my own property, this piece of ground and this little house, which have sometimes caused me shame on account of their smallness and barrenness, but which, nevertheless, were such a soft and comfortable nest for my numerous brood? Oh, blessed, ever blessed, be this spot! and, after I shall have gone from it, never more to return in the flesh, may it still shelter, in virtue and happiness, both sons and daughters whose blood once flowed in my own veins!

"But I now hear the bell of Bussière, which sounds the hour of prayer. Let us leave this for that; it is better to pray than to write. Drying away my tears, I will repeat here, all alone in this walk, the prayers which my little daughters used to respond to in following me, but which now only the sleepy sparrows and the falling leaves will hear. No, no, no, it is not good to be thus enervated and softened; on the contrary, we must reserve and increase our forces for the many duties which yet remain unaccomplished; and we have certain important duties to perform even on our death-beds. 'Tears,' says an ancient writer, 'tears weaken the hearts of men.' Now, quite as much as ever before, I have need of all the courage and strength of soul that I can possibly summon to my aid. In Heaven is my help; may Heaven help me!"

CXLII.

After this page, there is only one small volume more, full of domestic details, whose interest for us has diminished with the circumstances to which the notes them-

selves allude. In this concluding little volume all is finished by a last page, which seems to be a formal adieu to her manuscript, and which I here transcribe:

"It is God's will. Let us leave ourselves entirely to Him. Briefly, and in truth, all human wisdom consists in humbly and worshipfully resigning ourselves to His gracious will. I am very busy here just now, in putting my old journals in order; and this requires me to read them over and over again, which I am doing with much interest. I always rise from these readings with more profound and heartfelt gratitude for all the blessings which I have received from God, and with more regret and self-reproach for the little advancement which I have made in holiness, notwithstanding all my good reflections and resolutions, which have so rapidly come and gone, and gone and come, with so little profit. But there is yet time, always time, so long as God leaves us life, for us to take advantage of, in order to gain heaven. That is what I entreat of Him with all my heart and soul, while finishing these books and while humbly beseeching Him to shed abundantly upon me and mine all kinds of spiritual blessings. As for temporal blessings, I ask for them only as they may be necessary aids and supports in a regular yet sure way to heaven; but I abandon myself, without the least reserve, to His fatherly wisdom and purposes. May He bless me in my children, in my friends, and in all those whom I have loved and who have loved me. May He also bless my enemies, in so far as I may have been wrong in looking upon them with ill feeling or hatred, or in so far as they themselves may, at any time, have done me any unintentional injustice, or yet in so far as they may ever have been at fault in honestly misconstruing or misunderstanding my character and motives."

These, the last foregoing, are the last words which she wrote upon the last page of her last volume.

CXLIII.

Here, then, is all that is proposed to be recorded among the archives of earth of the soul of this eminently lovely and holy woman. The rest is written in the hearts of her children, in the traditions of the humble village where she resided for forty years, and in the recollections, ever pleasing like herself, of that truly Attic society of Mâcon, where her memory counts as many friends as there are survivors among her contemporaries.

The rest of our mother's manuscript would have little or no interest for the third generation of her descendants. It consists, for the most part, in minute details of her virtuous life. Those of her grandchildren who may be curious to examine those details may find them noted down in her own handwriting in the eighteen little original quires of paper, which I shall have the pleasure of transmitting to them, in a general inventory of heart-treasures. There they may find her under a thousand pleasing forms; now as the mother of a family; now as the friend of the poor; and now again as the sincerely pious woman, spreading out before God her heart-secrets, her self-torturing scruples of conscience, or her worldly griefs.

Here she tells us of her zeal, or of her lukewarmness, in her daily devotions at church or at her bedside; there of her attendance on religious ceremonies, and of her searching examinations of conscience on the eve of those particular days when she wished especially to draw nearer to the altar with a purer heart. Elsewhere she tells us of her domestic management; her plans for supplying the numerous wants of her family; the requirements of her ever-hospitable board; the wheat in her granary; the

wine of her vineyards; the young vines of her nurseries; the products of her dairy; the eggs from her poultry-yard; the prices of bread, butter, sugar, and vegetables at different seasons of the year; her constant and prudent calculations with a view of bringing the expenses of her frugal table within the limited privileges of only moderate harvests, and with a view, besides, of always saving out something in anticipation of the large demands so frequently made upon her for the poor. Further on are recipes carefully noted down and explained for the ordinary diseases of the country-people,—the whole so arranged as to constitute a complete guide to domestic practice, suited to a rural population. This little volume of carefully-written prescriptions she used at all hours of the day, standing in the portico of her house at Milly, and often dispensing, in addition to the mere prescriptions themselves, various kinds of medicine and other remedial agents to the crowds who came, especially in the mornings, to receive them from her hands. Sometimes the whole portico was filled with the infirm, the aged, and sick women and children, who, by her reputation for skill and kindness, had been attracted from nearly a score of the surrounding villages, as if on a pilgrimage to the holy and healing presence of a living saint.

Again, she tells of nights passed by the bedside of her own suffering children, or of some poor and distressed person of the village, and makes technical or semi-technical notes of her watchings and perceptions over the wounds she had dressed, over the symptoms, the attacks, the abatements and returns of the fever, and expresses her alternating hopes and fears in various stages of the disease. Sometimes she goes so far as to take from her bureau the linen of her beds to make, with her own nimble fingers, a shroud for some poor old man. She feels a

positive repugnance to this dressing of wounds, and this attendance on the dying; but she reproaches herself for yielding to these defects and weaknesses of her nature, and overcomes them by the energy of her will and by the vigor of her faith.

On leaving the scenes of these tests of charity and self-denial, she washes her beautiful hands, wipes away the tears coursing down her cheeks for the griefs of others, changes her ordinary service-dress for one of elegant simplicity, and again appears in society, her mind relaxed, and her heart open, with all the graceful bearing of an estimable and accomplished woman of the world. There she throws new life into the conversation, develops sympathy and pleasure in the hearts of others, and dissipates their cares with her own tranquillity, as the warm breezes of spring remove in their passage the dried-up leaves of the night before, to let the buds sprout forth as they fill and expand with new sap. In the radiance of her character and of her works she was almost worshiped, though she herself was in a manner indifferent to outward approbation. The countenances of the peasants who saw her pass with her daughters on their way to church, or on their return from visiting their own humble cottages, always became uncommonly respectful and affectionate, as if, in reality, they had had the good fortune to meet white-winged spirits of consolation crossing their pathway.

Her happiness at that time was not greatly disproportioned to her goodness. All of the more dreaded and difficult passes of her life were then behind her, and a long and serene horizon of evening, as yet undimmed by the darkness of night, was stretching out before her earnest gaze. The remarkably vigorous and robust old age of her husband had quite overcome his painful, though not

mortal, maladies; and it was now evident that Heaven was reserving for him also the days of great length hereditary in his family. Without any loss of mental vigor, and with only occasional impairments of physical health, he attained the age of fourscore years and ten.

Her son, who had so long been the torment of her mind, was now becoming her joy. He also had passed the stormy period of youth; and the storms of his middle age were not yet reached. Quieted down and made happy by a marriage which resulted from the promptings of his own heart; established in Italy, the particular country of his preferences; holding there a diplomatic position which enabled him to enjoy the pleasures of one of the most delightful abodes in all Europe; satisfied with the secondary but honorable rank which he held, and which was adorned in advance, in the eyes of his mother, with a certain halo of poetic glory; and without having yet excited the anger of the envious; he was at this time on leave of absence at Paris, and had just been elected, without any canvassing or solicitation on his own part, a member of the French Academy,—that official certificate of literary greatness which did not in the least deceive himself, but which most delightfully beguiled the heart of his good old father. This father had been accustomed, in the innocence and patriotism of his provincial life, to consider the title of Member of the French Academy as a sort of indelible mark of the glory of a name, or of the nobility of a family; in short, as the very solidifying and sanctification of a well-won renown, which posterity would never dare to call in question. The mother of this recipient of the honors of the Academy enjoyed at last the privilege of being able to say to her husband's whole family, "You perceive now that my motherly illusions, as you used to call them, were, after all, not so chimerical

as you said they were; that I was right in craving your patience and indulgence for a few boyish errors (or even vices, if you will so have it) on the part of my son; and that the great distinction which he has since conferred upon your name more than justifies my discernment and my affection."

That son was then at work on his inaugural address, which was to carry him, for the first time, before that literary tribunal from where he was already longing to leap, so soon as his age would permit, before that political tribunal which, for many years, had been the aim of all his studies.

When he should reach this summit of his ambition, he intended to follow the examples of Monsieur de Serre and Monsieur de Laine, and so defend at the same time both his masters and his models, the Bourbons (the idols of his father and mother), and the Liberal Constitution, the principles of which fully satisfied his own mind. He desired to defend these principles and those princes against the reactionary tendency of the monarchy and against the restless impatience of the republic, whose hour had not yet come to sound the tocsin of two revolutions, that of July, 1830, and that of February, 1848.

EPILOGUE.

It was toward the end of autumn in the year 1829, when everything betokened trouble, fever, and delirium in the mind and heart of France, no less in the Government itself than in the opposing factions. Prince Polignac, the Prime Minister, had so often and so earnestly insisted, in his unofficial and familiar letters, on my coming to Paris, where he persisted in reserving for me, under his supervision, the management of foreign affairs, that at last I concluded to come, not to accept, but to

explain in a becoming manner the motives of my refusal, and my gratitude for his friendly interest. I liked the prince, but feared his policy; and, in speaking to him, it was my wish that he should comprehend the distinction which I made between the man and the minister, and between my personal feelings and my political opinions. In my inaugural address before the French Academy, I had just defined very clearly my position of respectful but decided opposition to the threatened overthrow of the Constitution, and to the scarcely dissimulated projects of the Government against the rightful liberty of thought and the legal openness and independence of the elections. This pointedly political peroration, which was hardly expected from me,—ridiculed as I was in most of the Republican, Orleanist, and Bonapartist journals as a retrograding (not to say renegade) royalist,—was received with immense applause. Monsieur Laine and Monsieur Collard both at once recognized their disciple. In passing out from the hall of the Institute, which was still filled with the concourse, the Duke de Rohan, a friend of long standing, whispered in my ear, "Bid adieu to all advancement in your career; you have just disappointed our highest hopes, and given encouragement to all the hostile factions." Advancement in my career was a matter of little concern with me; but I saw a deep abyss only a little way in front of the feet of Charles X., and I earnestly desired, so far as it lay in my power, to turn him aside from it.

Prince Polignac, full of hope and faith in my future, had the year before entertained me with a degree of political and social familiarity which deeply moved me. In his confidence, as well as in his reticence, he had revealed to me a soul truly royal; but, at the same time, he displayed a mind prejudiced by his forced residence, his

exile abroad, and a heart alarmed by the inner consciousness of its own intentions.

The prediction of the Duke de Rohan was not realized, and I cannot help remembering it to the honor of both King Charles X. and Prince Polignac. This Prime Minister manifested no resentment on account of my address before the Academy; but, after long and fruitless discussions with me, in the course of very free and friendly conversations upon the motives of my refusal, which according to his views rested on only slight foundations, and after assuring me that no conspiracy to overthrow the Constitution was then meditated, he gracefully and condescendingly yielded to my resistance, and then offered me the honors and duties of Minister Plenipotentiary to Greece.

This was at a time when Europe was feverishly engaged in founding, upon a passing wave of enthusiasm, that artificial structure of Grecian nationality which was either the precious germ or the crumbling ruin of an indefinable grand something. I myself shared the general illusion which then prevailed among men of liberal minds, and especially among classical scholars, in regard to the Greeks, who had proved themselves so brave in battle, but who were yet so undisciplined in matters of civil government. The Prince of Coburg, widower of Princess Charlotte (who had been an heiress to the throne of England), had just been designated by the Western Powers as king of regenerated Greece. This prince was then in Paris. I had known him quite intimately in Italy, when in the habiliments of mourning he was there, vainly seeking consolation for his great and irreparable loss. Prince Polignac presented me to him as the most suitable minister whom the French Government could then commis sion to Greece. I was, I confess, much elated at the idea

of being present with a title, and with high functions and powers, at this resurrection of an empire upon the soil of so many glorious memories, and of participating in it myself, like Lord Byron, the heroic poet of this national resuscitation. The anticipations but too well founded of the deceptions, the storms, and the miseries which would beset this new birth, suddenly influenced the designated king not to accept the responsibility for the future fate of this people. He left Paris one night, fleeing from a kingdom as a man would flee from the verge of a threatening abyss.

On awaking the next morning, we learned that there was no longer any head on which to place this crown, which had already been worn, on the one side, or rejected, on the other, by so many brows. Diplomacy was then obliged to busy itself in choosing another candidate. For that, however, time was necessary; and so I remained Minister Plenipotentiary in prospective, and continued to receive from Prince Polignac every assurance and proof of familiarity and of favor compatible with my determination to abstain from all participation in the interior workings of his government.

My mother, intoxicated with happiness at this rapid advancement in my political career, at my prospective residence amid the classic shades of Athens, and at my recent election to the French Academy, was smiling at the delightful and promising future thus opening up before a son who in his early days had caused her so many anxious cares, but who was now the almost accomplished dream of her life.

I was making the necessary arrangements to spend near her the few months which I supposed I had yet to reside in France; and I was only prolonging my stay in Paris, for a fortnight or so, to prepare and purchase there certain

little feminine presents, consisting mostly of articles for the toilet, which it was always my custom and happiness to take to my mother and sisters whenever I had been far away from them. This, though, was but a slight return, a poor evidence of gratitude, for all the privations and sufferings which I had caused her in my youth, for the jewelry which she had parted with on my account, even to the rings on her fingers, in order to procure me a period of leisure, a trip somewhere, a pleasure of some sort, or for the purpose of concealing one or more of my faults from the just severity of the family.

The table and all the other articles of furniture in my room at Paris were temporarily covered with little boxes, jewel-cases, and unfolded bundles of stuffs suitable for chamber-hangings and for trimmings, which her happy son was collecting together, while thinking with pleasing anticipations of his return to the modest home of his mother, and the exclamations of surprise and joy which his little offerings would then produce. All this I was enjoying in advance, filled as I was with the idea of the great pleasure these small remembrances would give; not thinking so much of the trifles themselves, which I was collecting, but rather of the true and trusty hearts I was preparing to make glad with these tiny tokens of my own love.

One evening, about dinner-time (I have no need to write the date for myself), I was driving into the court-yard of my hotel, my buggy loaded with pasteboard boxes and other trinkets, such as one is always and everywhere apt to find as the appendages of womankind. My countenance was radiant with joy over the thought of my departure, fixed for the next day; and I was about to jump from my vehicle to the lower steps of the vestibule, when I saw before the doorkeeper's apartment the dearest of

all my friends, the very brother of my soul, Count Aymon de Virieu, whom Providence had given me, from the time of my tenderest youth up to manhood, seemingly to share with him, and he with me, everything in this strange and fitful life. After having pursued together the same studies in the same colleges, the same reveries in the country homes of our respective families, the same routes in our travels, the same lines and labyrinths of society in the great cities, we were now following the same career in the diplomatic service of our country. He himself was about to start, the next day, for his post of duty in Germany; and we had previously arranged to dine together, and to pass the evening in my room, in order to prolong as much as possible our pleasant conversation, and to delay somewhat our leave-taking.

In getting out of my buggy, to take the Count's hand as usual, I was struck by his paleness, and by the consternation involuntarily depicted on his expressive features. His eyes, ordinarily lighted up like two sparks of fire by the play of his gay and slightly sarcastic spirit, seemed, for the first time, suddenly extinguished. Instead of answering my look of pleasant welcome by one of the same kind, his eyes refused to greet mine; and when, a moment afterward, our glances did meet, I saw in the depths of his visage a sort of unaccountable sorrow and apprehension, mingled with pity. So far from smiling with me, his countenance revealed a certain vague bitterness of thought at seeing me so confident and so happy. The contented expression of my eyes, and my exhilaration of spirit, visibly worried him. He seemed to reproach me for my happiness, before telling me that I was doomed to be forever sad. His whole person was the living representation of some shocking catastrophe or tragic event.

Joy at once left my eyes, and the smile died away on

my lips. "Let us go up to your room," said he, with broken voice. "I have some very sad news to tell you. Let us shut ourselves up, and be alone, in your own apartment; for it will there be necessary for you to summon to your aid all the courage and fortitude of your manhood."

I ascended the stairs as if stunned by a blow on the heart. He drew me into my chamber, closed the door, and caused me to sit down on the edge of the bed, where my poor dog was leaping and frisking around with delight at my return, not understanding why his joyful jumps and caresses, which were ordinarily responded to with affectionate recognition, had now become to me both troublesome and repulsive. "Speak," said I to Virieu, covering my face with my hands, and trying meanwhile to prepare myself for the unknown. Ah, that, though, is the very worst of torture, for all parts of our being, yea, even our souls, seem to be threatened at once!

Then, with all the slowness and caution, with all the careful approaches and prudent retreatings, all the feeling around and probing, sometimes timid, sometimes bold, of a man charged with the duty of communicating an unexpected and terrible message, which is to pierce the heart without causing absolute death, he finished by saying, as he received my almost lifeless form in his arms, "No longer have you a mother!" It seemed to me that the earth itself was reeling from under my feet, and that the very germs and bases were being removed from my entire existence, past, present, and future. My soul mounted, by a single bound, to heaven, and so followed her who had been my first and purest life here below, and without whom it had hardly ever occurred to me that I should some day have to live.

She was so beautiful, so active, seemingly so young, and

apparently so full of life for the future, that the idea of an eternal separation had really never presented itself to me, except in the far-off distance, softened by the gradual approach of old age, and by the shortness of the time which I should myself have to pass in the world, after a slowly-pronounced and piously-prolonged farewell. The separation had already come; it came without gradation, and without farewell. In the morning, I was verily living in two bodies; but when the evening came, the one poor heart in my breast was in torture, groaning and crying out its agony, and seeming no longer to beat, except in the feebler and less worthy half of its existence. As if to fill my cup of sorrow to the very brim, fate, as touching my family, had left me quite alone in Paris. She who would have lovingly borne an almost equal share of my despair, and would most certainly and sincerely have mingled her tears and sobs with my own, was no longer there. Neither wife, nor child, nor mother! Nothing but an oppressive emptiness, a distressful void, within, without, here, there, everywhere, forever! Fortunately, however, I had near me one friend, who covered over, with his affectionate tenderness, the yawning abyss of sorrows into which I was about to plunge when his kind hand restrained me.

I remained on my bed, still dressed, prostrate with grief, and, as it were, annihilated, the whole evening and the whole night. That evening and that night, of which each sleepless and woe-inflicting minute is still present with me, as if unaffected by the lapse of time, were passed in wringing from the heart and tongue of my friend the particulars of that most doleful death. The circumstances were almost as heart-rending as the event itself had been sudden. I learned them one by one from the lips of Monsieur de Virieu. He did not leave me

until the dawn, and then only to make the necessary preparations for my departure and return to Mâcon. Alas, it was already too late to embrace, at least before her burial, the remains of her who had lovingly borne me nine months in her womb, and all my life in her heart.

Here, then, is what my friend told me of the circumstances of her death, and also what relatives and servants added afterward to the narrative of that agony of which they themselves had been the eye-witnesses:

My mother was expecting me from day to day, with an impatience full of happiness. Her alternate and lively hopes and joys, and the deep emotions she had felt at my election to the French Academy and my quickly succeeding appointment as Minister to Greece, had brought upon her a slight fever. On the 27th of November, after having, according to her custom, attended mass before daylight, she went directly from the church to the public baths, which are kept by the Sisters of Charity of the city, in the large asylum which bears their name. The Superior of the Sisterhood, who received her, and who conversed with her a moment on pious subjects while her bath was being prepared, relates that she spoke with that peculiar kindness of heart and cheerfulness of spirit which invariably characterized the gentleness of her disposition in her best days. When the bath was ready, she went into it without any attendant, according to the habit which, as a member of the Sisterhood of Salles, she had formed in early life, and which she had scrupulously preserved even after her marriage, of never employing any one in matters of minor personal requirements; for she always dressed and undressed herself, and made her own fires, in devout remembrance of the poverty and humility of the great Founder of Christianity.

She had been in the bath some minutes, when the

Superior of the Sisterhood, in passing along the corridor which communicated with the doors of the bath-cells, heard a cry from her cell, followed by a smothered groan. She hastily entered. The bath-tub was overflowing with boiling water, and steam was rising from the floor. The neck of the faucet through which the hot water flowed was wide open, and great streams of the boiling element were pouring forcibly upon the bare breast and shoulders of my poor mother. From the very first the shock seems to have rendered her unconscious. She was hurriedly taken out, in the arms of the Lady Superior and an assistant, from that pitiless cascade of fire, more than half dead already. It was evident that, wishing more hot water in the bath, she had quickly opened the full orifice of the pipe, and that the sudden and irresistible rush of the boiling liquid upon her breast unnerved her completely, so that she had neither the strength nor the time to reclose the faucet. The cool air restored her breath and consciousness. She kissed the Lady Superior, who had badly scalded her own hands and arms in drawing her out of the bath-tub.

They placed her on one of the mattresses of the asylum, and then four of the inmates, who were poor girls selected from among the abler cases of incurables, to whom, during twenty years, she herself had so often brought linen and medicine and food, carried her back from the asylum to her home. The rumor of this sad and distressing event had already spread throughout the city. The crowds of early-rising servants and pious women coming out of the churches followed her to her door, weeping, and praying to God for her recovery. A public lamentation was heard in all the streets through which the litter passed; and it really seemed as if the city was losing its mother, as I was losing mine. Physicians were sum-

moned, and they came in haste. The accident did not appear to be fatal; but, in the evening, the removal of the first dressing from her wounds revealed the great gravity of her condition. She had an attack of fever, and soon became delirious.

Her delirium, or rather her dream, was like her character, always gentle and smiling in its manifestations. She would become rational at times, long enough to thank, with touching simplicity and sincerity, the women who were serving her, and to console and cheer, with prolonged hope, my poor father, who knelt at her bedside, stricken by a blow which had completely overcome his ordinary powers of endurance.

By a supreme effort of the will, she almost forgot her sufferings, and gave her thoughts freely, up to her very last hour, to those who loved her on earth, and to God in heaven, whom she already saw through faith. She wished to unite herself once more with Him in that holy sacrament in which her faith had so often realized the possession of divinity by the creature, as well as the possession of the creature by divinity. One might have come to the conclusion that her bright and beautiful features, glowing with the fervor of conviction, and sanctified by that mysterious union, was illuminating the darkness of her bed more than the wax candles which the kneeling children of the asylum were holding up in their hands, behind the curtains.

A great calm, a long silence, and a sweet sleep, which again awakened the hopes of all, followed this ceremony for the dying. False glimmer! Deceitful appearance! She awoke only to expire, yet with all the love and lucidness of her heart and mind. She who was present in this last agony, in the shadows of the falling night, and who, by her tender and affectionate care, was trying

to supply my absence, has often repeated to me literally the broken words of her dream-like delirium, which she pronounced, from time to time, in her sweetest voice, until morning:

"My husband, . . . my children, . . . Alphonse, Marianne, Cecilia, Eugenia, Sophie; God bless them all! Oh that they were all here now, so that He might bless them by my hand! My Alphonse! How grieved he will be not to have been near me in this supreme hour! Tell him, oh, tell him that I suffer no more! . . . that I feel already as if I were in a place of safety, peace, and delight, where I behold heaven for myself, and manifold blessings in store for all my dear children who are yet on the earth." . . .

Then, falling again into what seemed a sweet slumber, during which an occasional smile would play upon her lips, she only came out of it to speak a few words which, toward daybreak, they heard her stammer feebly: "Oh, how happy I am! How happy I am! My God, Thou hast not deceived me! Blessed be Thy name! Happy am I! I am so happy!" And with these words she gave up to God her last sigh. Such, then, is, word for word, the account of her death. All the witnesses are still there, to tell it over again, except my father and poor Philiberte, who in losing her mistress lost all her desire to live, and who, indeed, lived only long enough to con tinue to render faithfully to her master the services which she devoted to him chiefly through admiration and gratitude to my mother. Oh, what a noble and holy exchange do we find emanating from that tie of domestic relationship which springs up between the servant who serves for love and the family which rewards that service with thankfulness, with affection, and with well-considered equality before the tribunal of the heart! It is a relationship

between the different classes and ranks upon the earth, distinct by fortune, but leveled by just and kindly sentiment.

It was already three days that I had no longer a mother when I arrived at Mâcon, in the hope of being able to see once more, at least under the shroud of death, her dear and saintly features. I was accompanied by a perfect friend, a true Samaritan, who was always found near me during my times of greatest anguish, Amédée de Perseval, whom a heart-remembrance, to which allusion is made in the manuscript, bound faithfully to my mother, of whom he had vainly desired to become also a son. It was too late. The coffin was already resting under heaps of snow, in the frozen ground of the city cemetery. In the absence of my poor father, forced away, almost dying, from his home at the very moment of her last sigh, and in the absence of her children, far away in their respective places of residence, they forgot that the deceased had frequently expressed her preference for the cemetery of Saint Point, under the shadow of the little village church, where her piety used to lead her so often to meditate on holy things, during her summer pastimes in that beautiful valley of peace. I found nothing to kiss but the head-board of her bedstead, which had been taken apart on account of her death, the floor of her chamber, and the threshold of her door, through which had passed her coffin, amid the sobbing of the whole city, on its way to the common field of the dead.

My heart revolted against the idea that the oft-expressed desire of this sainted woman should not be fulfilled after her transfiguration, and also against the idea of not being able to visit her loved remains except by passing through a crowd of the unknown dead, or among those of little or no interest to me. I resolved, therefore, while it was

yet time, to repair, so far as it was in my power to do so, this neglect of her earnest wish, and to exhume the coffin, in order to transport it to the hallowed place of her choice. It seemed to me that the infinite distance between her soul and myself would be materially lessened if her coffin were only reposing somewhere between the threshold of my own abode and that of the neighboring church of Saint Point. To tell the whole truth, however, there was, in this disinterment, a pretext and an opportunity to see once more, but never again, her adored features, before time, the great destroyer of all things, should reduce her body to a handful of dust. The coffin had no mark to distinguish it from other coffins, and the grave-digger had not even marked the spot where the fast-falling snow had since effaced the signs of his spade. It therefore became necessary to open the coffin, in order to assure ourselves that we were not deceived, and that we were not carrying away, in our hearts and hands, the relics of some one unknown, instead of the remains of my mother.

I spare myself the recital of some of the more mournful details. Everything was accomplished during the night as I had wished. We removed the snow which had heaped itself upon the grave; and then, groping in the dark, we found the coffin among other receptacles of the dead. Philiberte, who had carefully dressed and laid out her dear mistress, recognized the coffin immediately; and it was then opened to afford me a short, transitory view, by the glimmer of the tapers, of the sleeping countenance. I saw before me my mother, complete in all her features and beauty of face, except her eyes, and her animation. It was indeed my mother; but yet I could see her only through the veil of eternity which had been lifted up between us. My lips touched her forehead with both terror and love. The coffin received my tears. It was

closed again. I alone watched by it with Philiberte, while waiting for the hour of night, when the peasants of Milly were to come, one by one, and without noise, to bear away upon their shoulders, in a march of four hours, the dead body of their lady.

At midnight we began our dreary walk, over a deep layer of crusted snow, through the long suburban road which leads from the city to the first hills of our mountainous horizon. Although the mournful train of attendants had been strictly limited by me to myself alone of all the members of the family, and to the farmers and laborers attached to her estate at Milly, yet the wives and children of these honest and kind-hearted people, clad in their poor dresses of disconsolation, had deemed themselves entitled, by right of affection, to follow the head of the family, and were lengthening out upon the highway the already long black file of weepers, whose copious and heart-bred tears there had been no need of purchasing. Not a voice, not a whisper, was heard from that large procession during the whole long march. The only sounds audible were those made by the women walking and leading their little children by the hand over the hardened snow, and, from time to time, the sudden and grating noise of the oak coffin as it received a slight shock in the change of its place on the shoulders of the bearers, who vied with each other in their eagerness to take turns under the holy burden.

After marching two hours and a half from the city, we left the main road, and, by a cross-path covered with icicles, ascended the steep hill upon the top of which is built the little hamlet of Milly. All the people were awake, and on the threshold of every cottage was to be seen an old man or a little child, holding a lighted lamp, or a taper, which threw its glimmering rays on pale faces,

weeping eyes, and hands shivering with the extreme cold of that raw December night.

Arriving at last in the court-yard of the house, the bearers of the bier, followed by all the inhabitants of the village, mounted the five steps of the stoop, and laid the coffin down in that same vestibule where she was accustomed to receive, every morning, the sick and needy, distributing to them food and ointments and clothing, and dressing the sprains and bruises of the wounded, on her knees beside them. The same benches of walnut-wood upon which they used to stretch their limbs, bound around with salve-lined linen rags, were the very ones which served, on that cold night of sorrow, to support her coffin. There she was, prostrate in death, on the very instruments of her charity. A great sob then burst forth from the swollen hearts of all the cottagers who were there assembled. Each one drew near to dip a branch of boxwood in the vessel of holy water at the head of her bed, and to shed upon her coffin their streaming tears. During this halt under the roof of her youth and of her love, I withdrew alone into her chamber, and there buried my face in the drapery of her empty bed. From that sanctuary of my grief I heard, for a long time, the cloggy noise of the footsteps, in wooden shoes, of the men and women going up and down the stony stoop, to take their turns at briefly kneeling and praying in the vestibule.

Thus we waited for the first rays of daylight before venturing into the narrow pass of the high mountain, deeply covered with fine snow, which had been so drifted by the north wind that it concealed the paths and filled up the ravines. It might have been perilous to follow those paths in the dark; and I was unwilling that the small party which was to bear the body of my mother

from her house at Milly to the cemetery of Saint Point should run any risk whatever of their own lives.

The moment that the dawn began to color the tops of the far-off Alps, which were visible from Milly, we set out again, escorted by the weeping villagers as far as the summit of the first hill which overlooks the gardens and vineyards of the estate. At the curve of the high valley we dismissed the train of mourners, who seemed to be losing their Providence; and our little group of eight hardy men at once made their entrance into the rough, narrow, and difficult pass which leads to the top of the mountain, and which is called the Cross of Signals. Four of these men marched in front of the coffin, in order to test the depth of the snow and to clear the path, whilst the four others were carrying my mother. I walked alone, behind them, stepping in the depressions made by their great wooden shoes. The snow, in some places, was up to our knees. It deadened every noise, except the sharp, shrill whistling of the north wind.

Two little birds, which seemingly had lost their way, not finding any other solid spot on which to alight, came once and perched themselves on the black cloth of the coffin, which the bearer had laid down for a few moments on the edge of a ravine, so as to be free to scrape off with their knives the accumulated and impeditive snow on the soles of their shoes. I know not wherefore, but true it is, that these little birds, seeking food and shelter upon a coffin, melted me to tears. Doubtless it brought back to my mind a glimpse of all the sufferings and sorrows of which that sympathizing heart had been the sanctuary whilst its pulsations were yet strong. The birds warbled two or three plaintive notes, and then, taking wing again, fluttered about us as we passed on toward Saint Point. I thought immediately of the spirits of

Césarine and Suzanne, and imagined that they had come, under the symbols of those pretty little wings, to receive their mother, and to precede and safely conduct her to her final resting-place. It is not difficult to conceive the superstitions to which a man may be subjected when his heart and head are excited beyond the control of reason. There are times when every man becomes more or less like a woman, and when the greatest vigor of his manhood yields to the enervation of tears.

Our plodding journey, which, in the season of fine weather, requires but two hours to accomplish, then, in that ocean of snowy billows, threatening every instant to swallow us all up, lasted seven hours. There were some passages along the deep ravines, in descending on the other side toward the valley of Saint Point, where our only guides were the great black trunks of dead chestnut-trees, bending over the abyss, and where we might have perished but for the skill and vigor of these robust peasants of Milly. Their precious burden seemed to inspire them with both strength and confidence.

Arriving just as the shades of evening began to acquire the density of night, we deposited the coffin, as we had done at Milly, in the room and upon the bed of my mother, which, for several years past, had become my own. I shut myself up in a small tower, which serves as a closet to the chamber, and, stretching a mattress upon the floor, watched alone, with the door of the chamber open between my deceased mother and myself, through the last long and wintry night that those beloved remains were to pass under the roof of her old home. It may seem somewhat strange, but still I fancied that in thus prolonging my vigil over her body I was also prolonging the more immediate presence of her spirit with me. God alone knows the tears, the invocations, the blessings, the reve-

lations of that night! Toward daybreak I fell asleep, through sheer exhaustion. When I awoke, the bell was already calling the inhabitants from all the little hamlets of the surrounding mountains to the ceremony of the second burial. Yet, after all, it was not to be the last of her sepulture; for, by a strange coincidence of unforeseen circumstances, it seemed as if the earth itself was alternately receiving and giving back again the remains whose possession was disputed by old-time love and veneration, even to the tomb. Extending my view out upon the two immense slopes of snow, which formed the larger of the two great valleys before me, I saw what seemed to be dark clouds descending and advancing from all the thatched roofs, isolated or grouped together, on the two hill-sides, toward the church and toward the house. All the country for a great distance around had put on mourning, and the heart-melting cries of uncontrollable and convulsive lamentation were borne on the wind, from the cemetery to my ears.

There had been no preparation in this cemetery for a permanent interment. Death had surprised us without a tomb. If my mother had been consulted, as my father was, in regard to the exact locality and manner of her last resting-place on earth, her heavenly-minded freedom from all care for her mortal remains would doubtless have caused her to request final lodgment in the common ground of the poor and humble. But she had not had time nor opportunity to make known specifically her preferences in this matter, and had only expressed, in general terms, a vague desire to be interred at Saint Point. I could not reconcile myself to the idea of permitting the traces of those relics to be lost to my own self, to my sisters, to my sisters' children, nor to that innumerable family of peasants, who were as much related to her by

affection as we ourselves were by blood. Already, indeed, in the inhumation of countless numbers of others thereabout, had the law of oblivion been amply observed under the grass and moss upon which the cattle were in the habit of grazing in the common field of the church. No! my mother's remains should have a well-marked and durable shrine of love and sanctitude, to which they were entitled. I therefore resolved to build a little family sepulchre, where we, as her immediate descendants, might go and rejoin her, if God should so ordain that we should die where we had lived and loved.

The sight and the surroundings of the garden at Saint Point were very favorable to this idea of a small mausoleum. The church and the mansion stood on the same hill, which rose in the middle of the valley, like the pedestal of an ancient temple. The church is so wedged in among the terraces and inclosures of the mansion that it is evident to the eye that it was formerly dependent on it, and that, in the ages long past, it was probably the chapel of a feudal castle. To-day the gardens of the estate are separated from the rustic cemetery, which surrounds the church, only by a hedge of boxwood and hazel-bushes, overtopped by a few old walnut-trees, whose nuts are common property, and fall as soon as ripe, under the energetic and mischievous efforts of the juvenile peasants, upon the neglected graves of the dead. The black walls and the Roman belfry of the church add, in summer, the coolness of their shade to that of the hedge of hazel-bushes, and invest this part of the garden with something of the obscurity, retirement, and melancholy of a sanctuary. This was always the favorite retreat of my mother, during the warm hours of mid-day, in the month of harvest. From the windows of my little tower I used to be delighted to see her there, with a book in

her hand, upon a rustic chair, supported at the back by a cherry-tree, which rose above the thicket, and whose branches, red with fruit, were hanging over her head.

In the very midst of my grief, I experienced a certain solid sort of solace in thinking that, though dead, she would yet repose in the same well-chosen spot of the garden, under the same shade, surrounded by the same lawn strewn with leaves and fruits, where she used to rest and read and enjoy herself so much during her life. I therefore determined to build her sepulchre there, upon our own private ground, where it might continue to be the dearest possession of the family. But as no one to-day can be assured of the stability of any property whatever, not even that of a family sepulchre, and as adversity may transfer a tomb, as well as a tract of land, from one proprietor to another, I foresaw a remote contingency wherein creditors or indifferent persons might become the owners of the mansion and gardens, and did not wish that her children or grandchildren should ever be dispossessed, by sale or otherwise, of the mortal remains of a mother, as if they were a merchantable thing to be traded off some day, and so permitted to pass irreverently and unconcernedly from hand to hand. I therefore meditated the purpose which I have since accomplished, of giving the ground of this garden, wherein the sepulchre was to be built, to the village, on condition of their preventing forever its desecration ; and in order that this charge might not be burdensome to the parish, I agreed to give, in consideration, as much additional land, adjoining the church property, as would be required for the construction of a parsonage, which was lacking, and also to build the parsonage at my own expense. The law which guarded the interests of the corporation was in no way antagonistic to a proposition prospectively so advantageous to the inhabitants of the

valley, and accordingly the contract was ratified in good time, without the raising of any sort of opposition or difficulty.

As, however, I could not bear the thought that, during my lifetime, nor so long as persons of the same blood, after me, should possess the residence, the sepulchre, thus inclosed at once, should be taken from our sight and from our domestic worship, I projected, and soon afterward erected, a simple but substantial wall, high enough for all purposes of protection, and covered over with ivy, so that it might form a sufficient boundary between the cemetery and the garden, and at the same time permit us to recline against it from the inside, and there recall our memories, shed our tears, and repeat our prayers and invocations, without being seen by those who might be indifferent to our sorrows.

It was during my sad watch by the side of the coffin, which in the morning was to be forever removed from my sight, that the instincts of affection which were struggling in my breast against the inevitable separation suggested to me, and enabled me to combine, in a mechanical manner, all the details of the final interment. I had already conceived an imperfect idea of it at Mâcon, and had obtained from the Government a permit to deposit the coffin temporarily under the slabs of the church, in the large vault of the ancient noblemen of Saint Point, the illustrious Rocheforts. What of all that I possessed in this world would I not have given to have had, then and there, repeated for us, in reality, a miracle similar to the one which is reported to have taken place, in that very vault, a century ago?

As local tradition will have it, a young Marchioness of Saint Point, who had been married only a few weeks, having fallen into a long fainting-fit, was supposed to be dead, and

was buried in an open coffin under the arched vault of the church. The stone which closes the vault, under the feet of the choristers, had been properly fastened in its place over her sepulchre. On the evening following her interment, the sexton, going to ring the bell for vespers, heard groans under the marble slabs. He ran away terrified, and went immediately to the castle to tell his strange story. The disconsolate husband and his servants, all in tears, ran at once to the sepulchre, and there listened to the subterranean voice, which, in truth, struck their ears. They quickly removed the stone, which had been sealed in its place, descended into the vault, and, to their inexpressible surprise and delight, found the lady alive. She was affectionately and tenderly carried home in the arms of her rescuers, and, being still young and beautiful, she gave many long and happy years to her husband before going down again, in good old age, to the place of her last earthly repose. In my boyhood I had often heard the bell-ringer himself and his aged spouse tell about this alleged miracle, of which they themselves had been eye-witnesses, and of which most of the old people of the village still clearly remembered the circumstances. Alas, miracles of vivification are not wrought for all who mourn!

In the early morning the coffin was transferred from the bed to the church, and followed by the people of twelve hamlets in mourning and in tears. On our way to the church, we crossed the garden by that same alley of hazel-bushes, through which I had so often seen the good woman returning from the altar with her countenance full of sorrow and deep thought, or all aglow with conscious piety and happiness. My own hands helped to lower the corpse and lay it in its eternal abode. I went back to the house alone, and shut myself up in the tower,

turning the key. Tears have their modesty, like all things that are hid in the depths of the heart. I prostrated myself on the floor, my hands on my forehead, my eyes fixed on the steeple of the church, and my ears involuntarily listening to the melancholy tolling of the bell, whose regular ringing, morning and evening, used to be so dear to her, and which was now also, in deep and expressive mourning for her, sending the sounds of its sorrowful sighs over all the surrounding hills. My mind was busy with those solemn and sacred thoughts which are never spoken on earth. All that I now remember with distinctness is that my ideas, rendered morbid and feverish by so many days of sleepless emotion and anguish, were echoing and re-echoing in my empty head with a noise somewhat like the beating of an iron sledge upon a big bronze drum, and were vibrating, even while I wept, in unison and cadence with the bell; so that the secret hymns of my heart seemed to be sobs, and my sobs seemed to be hymns. What a strange contradiction in our nature, at once material and intellectual, when the senses become giddy, and the ear oscillates and tingles while the soul groans!

Toward morning I fell into a light slumber, but soon awoke to resume with my guides the snowy paths of the mountain, where we again narrowly escaped envelopment beneath the fleecy drifts. The bright but icy rays of the winter sun seemed to be only a mockery, alike of the season and of my grief. I was anxious to return to console my father and other grievously distressed members of the family. That winter was to us all, indeed, both as to duration and severity, more than one ordinary winter.

Thus it is, my sisters, my nearest of living kindred, thus it is that we lost our mother; and thus it is also

that our little scope of country lost, in a single woman, its grace, its charm, and its protector. Ask the first widow or old man you may meet on the road to Saint Point, to Milly, or to Mâcon!

Let us, as the first generation of her descendants, dutifully and affectionately cherish her memory. This is why I have transcribed her manuscript. We ourselves will soon disappear, one by one, each of us bearing a portion of love and sorrow for her. These pages will help to preserve to her later descendants, for a brief period, the memory of her heaven-born virtues and excellence; and then, like ourselves, they, too, will become dust. Behold the evanescent significance of a book; behold the fleeting fate of a generation!

AN ALPHABETICAL INDEX

TO

LEADING NAMES AND SUBJECTS.

Arquebuse, a Knight of the, 45.
Bankrupt merchant, 128.
Birch, Marianne, 185, 188, 195, 196.
Births in war-time, 41.
Bonaparte's death, 218.
Bonaparte's fall, 158.
Bonaparte's marriage, 138.
Bow-and-arrow correspondence, 45.
Children of the family, 56, 167, 168.
Day of the dead, 15.
Diary of Madame Lamartine, 55.
Fainting of a female orphan, 80.
Félicite, Mademoiselle, 81.
Friendship, 197.
Going to the Alps to cool off a courtship, 133.
Gossiping about neighbors, 108.
Government, forms of, discussed, 199–201.
Hailstorms destructive to vineyards, 92, 94.
Happiness of married life, 116, 167, 168.
Honest men, 92, 129.
Huruge, Mademoiselle Saint, 76.
Increase of family, 93, 104, 152, 163, 183, 204, 208, 216.
Inheritance under the law of primogeniture, 49.
Javogue, Proconsul, 47.
Lamartine, Alice de Roy, 33–36, 50–59, 250–255, 259–279.
Lamartine, Alphonse de, 13, 107, 129, 136, 143–149, 161, 163, 185, 189, 192, 193, 194, 198, 217–219, 221–225, 229, 239–244.
Lamartine, Cecilia de (Cessia), 142, 182.
Lamartine, Césarine de (Vignet), 166, 167, 178, 179, 196.
Lamartine, Eugenia de (Coppens), 164, 165.

Lamartine, Mademoiselle de, 76–78, 125, 233.
Lamartine, Monsieur de, 76, 77, 100, 125, 232, 233.
Lamartine, Sophie de (Ligonne), 93, 232, 234.
Lamartine, Suzanne de (Montherot), 183, 204, 205–215.
Lamartine, the Abbot of, 102, 127, 141, 169, 229.
Lamartine, the Chevalier de, 36–38, 43, 49–53, 159, 245, 246.
Little wooden-shod shepherds, 88–90.
Milly, description of, 60–66.
Milly, the old homestead at, 69.
Mountain musings, 87, 95, 181, 182.
Musings and scenes about Milly, 15–22, 29–31.
New-year resolutions, 130.
Novel-reading, 78, 133, 134, 143.
Nuns, 122.
Old man with only a goat, 57–59.
Opera, the, 147, 148.
Passing the time, 127, 128, 133, 135, 137, 138.
Peddlers, 94.
Poems, 22, 27, 69, 170.
Political dissensions, 150, 184, 199–201, 235, 239.
Poor woman in child-bed, 111.
Poor woman (another) without bread, 84.
Praying always, 104, 132, 195, 202, 203.
Preservation of a female corpse, 116.
Proscription of certain books, 133, 143.
Rejoicing at the return of peace, 155–159.
Religion and virtue, 118, 119, 160, 161, 166.
Resuscitation of the nationality of Greece, 257.
Retrospection, 244, 249.
Roland, Madame, 133.
Ronchaud, Louis de, 9.
Rousseau, J. J., 35, 110, 144.
Sinning against charity, 119.
Solitude a pleasure, 131.
The Old Homestead at Milly (poem), 69.
The Spring in the Woods (poem), 170.
The Village Bell (poem), 27.
Thoughts on the Dead (poem), 22.
Voltaire, 34.
War troubles, 149, 154, 155, 162, 163.
Well off in the world, 124, 156, 193, 194.
Yearning of man's spirit, 119.

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